

SPIRITUAL LIFE DEVELOPMENT
FOR YOUNG CHRISTIAN LEADERS
IN HONG KONG

A THESIS-PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY
MICHAEL YUE WANG, LEUNG

OCTOBER 2018

This thesis-project is dedicated to my brotherly soulmates,
who have been my regular prayer support
week by week never ceases.

You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope.

With less of you, there is more of God and his rule.

You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you.

Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

You're blessed when you're content with just who you are — no more, no less.

That's the moment you find yourselves,
proud owners of everything that can't be bought.

You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God.

He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.

You're blessed when you care.

At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for.

You're blessed when you get your inside world — your mind and heart — put right.

Then you can see God in the outside world.

You're blessed when you can show people how to

cooperate instead of compete or fight.

That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.

You're blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution.

The persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom.

— Matthew 5:3-10, *The Message*

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	x
ABSTRACT	xi
Chapter	
1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING	
Introduction	I
The Contextual Situation of Young Leaders	4
Revisiting the Spiritual Needs of Young Leaders	12
The Performing Leader	13
The Unhelped Helper	14
The Trapped Identity	15
Self-Focused Survivor	16
The Context of Youth Work	18
Revisiting the Ministry Gap in Youth Work	21
Spiritual Formation for Identity Exploration	21
Spiritual Formation for Wholistic Spirituality	23
Spiritual Formation for Missional Disciples	26
Spiritual Life Development for Young Leaders	28
2. THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	
Restating the Essences of Spiritual Formation for Young Leaders	30
Transformational Growth for Identity Exploration	33

Hindrances to Identity Exploration (Problem Anthropology)	33
Consideration of Identity Exploration in Christ	36
Transformational Growth for the Fragmented Life	40
Relational Community for Wholistic Spirituality	49
Hindrances to Wholistic Spirituality (Problem Ecclesiology)	49
Consideration of Wholistic Spirituality for Transitional Youth	51
Relational Community for the Disconnected Life	59
Vocational Pathfinding for Missional Discipleship	64
Hindrances to Missional Discipleship (Problem Eschatology)	64
Spiritual Formational Themes in the New Testament	66
Consideration of Discipleship in the Gospel of Matthew	71
Vocational Pathfinding for the Reduced Missional Life	76
Summary of the Spiritual Formation Essences	82
3. LITERATURE REVIEW	
The Contextual Situation Related to Young Leaders	84
Perspectives of Spiritual Formation to Consider	93
Evangelically Informed Perspective	94
Christologically Informed Perspective	102
Faith Developmentally Informed Perspective	107
Whole Life Informed Perspective	111
Typologically Informed Perspective	113
Spiritual Formation Essences Related to Young Leaders	118
Summary of the Literature Review	140

4.	PROJECT DESIGN	
	Reimagining the Process of Spiritual Formation	142
	The Biblical Framework	143
	The Spiritual Formation Journey in Psalm 139	143
	The Moment of Transformation in Psalm 139	150
	The Spiritual Life Development Framework	153
	Overview of the Framework	153
	Four Quadrants of Life Review	157
	The Focus of the Framework	163
	Reinitiating the Spiritual Formational Journey	164
	The Project	167
	The Research	174
	The Assessment	184
5.	OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT	
	Overview of the Assessment	190
	Assessment of the YLT Project Across Three Years	193
	Assessment of the SLD Framework for 2017	210
	Assessment of the Texture of the SLD Framework	225
	Overview of the Spiritual Growth	246
6.	REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION	
	Reflections on the Action	253
	Accents Throughout the Journey	257
	To Be Fully Alive	263

EPILOGUE — NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	265
Appendix	
A. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION	269
B. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM SCHEDULE	270
C. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAINING SESSION	271
D. SAMPLE LESSON PLAN AND SCRIPT (SESSION 8)	274
E. PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE	276
F. GROWTH EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE	278
G. DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAM ACROSS THREE YEARS	281
H. DELIVERY OF THE COMMUNITY ACROSS THREE YEARS	283
I. EFFECT OF THE GROWTH ACROSS THREE YEARS	285
J. EFFECT OF THE PROJECT ACROSS THREE YEARS	288
K. EMPTY-SELF CHARACTERISTICS IN 2017	289
L. SPIRITUAL NEEDS CHARACTERISTICS IN 2017	290
M. DEGREE OF THE AWARENESS ACQUIRED IN 2017	291
N. EFFECT OF THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN 2017	293
O. THEMATIC EXPRESSION OF 2016	295
P. MASK DRAWING OF 2016	298
Q. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF 2017	300
BIBLIOGRAPHY	315
VITA	325

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1.1. Influences on Young Christian Leaders	16
Figure 2.1. The Beatitudes Compared in Four Phases	78
Figure 4.1. Spiritual Formation Journey of Psalm 139	145
Figure 4.2. Spiritual Life Development Framework	156
Table 4.1. Summary of Discussion	166
Table 5.1. Assessment of the Program (see appendix G)	194
Table 5.2. Assessment of the Community (see appendix H)	197
Table 5.3. Assessment of the Community by Spiritual Growth Progression	198
Table 5.4. Assessment of the Community by Question 3	200
Table 5.5. Assessment of the Community Personal Sphere by Group	201
Table 5.6. Assessment of the Relational Growth (see appendix I)	202
Table 5.7. Assessment of the Relational Growth with Christ by Year	205
Table 5.8. Assessment of the Effect (see appendix J)	206
Table 5.9. Empty-Self Characteristics (see appendix K)	211
Table 5.10. Spiritual Needs Characteristics (see appendix L)	213
Table 5.11. Assessment of the Awareness Acquired (see appendix M)	214
Table 5.12. Assessment of the Spiritual Growth (see appendix N)	216
Table 5.13. Assessment of the SLD Sphere Shadow	218
Table 5.14. Assessment of the SLD Sphere Wounds	220
Table 5.15. Assessment of the SLD Sphere Grace	222
Table 5.16. Assessment of the SLD Sphere Vocation	223

Table 5.17. Awareness Acquired by Participant (see appendix M)	231
Table 5.18. Summary of SLD Statistics of the Selected Participants	232
Table 5.19. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 35	234
Table 5.20. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 33	236
Table 5.21. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 21	238
Table 5.22. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 15	240
Table 5.23. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 24	242

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for the help of Dr. Philemon Choi Yuen Wan, his wisdom, his teachings, his experiences, and his sensitivity to the Spirit. Most of the frameworks of the re-imagined ministry models are Dr. Choi's original blueprints, and this thesis-project merely follows his plan. Seeing him putting his understanding of the faith into practice and bringing people together for the mission of God is no doubt an experience like that described in Eugene Peterson's *Run with the Horses: The Quest for Life at Its Best* — expanding one's heart to pursue wholeness and excellence.

Thank you to David Fong, the responsible pastor in the Youth Zone of Yan Fook Church, for allowing me to participate in the training of their young leaders from 2013 to 2017. This participation allowed me to complete nearly a whole generational cycle of their senior youth ministry zone. It is more than building a ministry model, action, and research, but allowing the youth to experience personally the transformational power of the Lord.

Thank you to those Youth Workers of Breakthrough Limited, my beloved co-workers who have been practicing spiritual life development in a variety of developmental and cultural contexts with youth, seeing hundreds of lives being transformed in Christ as never before.

Thank you to my colleagues in Youth Global Network Limited, the group of spiritual formation as well as the research team, who gave valuable advice to enlighten the discussion of this thesis and guided the building of the model, the application of the actions, and the design of the research methodology.

ABSTRACT

This thesis-project focuses on the spiritual life development of young Christian leaders in Hong Kong who are in their transition from college youth to young working adults. The discussion is in three approaches. Firstly, the descriptive approach revisits the current settings and identifies the spiritual needs of young leaders whose lives are being constrained as a performing leader, unhelped helper, self-focused survivor, and trapped identity. It also looks into the ministry gaps of youth work which display a deficiency of spiritual formation for identity exploration, wholistic spirituality, and missional discipleship. Secondly, the normative approach reinstates three formational dynamics in response to the ministry gaps of youth work. The transformational dynamic refers to the effect of a fragmented life due to a problem anthropology, in which a lack of integration of life events prevents life from being oriented under divine guidance. The relational dynamic refers to a disconnected life due to a problem ecclesiology, in which a lack of a communion of grace prevents relating authentically, reconciling separation, repositioning concerns, and rediscovering humanness in the Spirit. The vocational dynamic refers to a reduced missional life due to problem eschatology, in which a lack of discipleship prevents life from following in the footprints of Christ. Finally, the relational approach reimagines a spiritual life development framework consisting of four quadrants of life review: shadow to contemplate, wounds to forget, grace to remember, and vocation to act. It also reinitiates the formation ethos by applying the framework into the Young Leader Training project, where the spiritual growth markers are identified in response to the spiritual needs of young leaders.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Introduction

Generations of Christian Leaders

During the 1950s and 1960s, Hong Kong experienced an unusual student movement. As was the case in the rest of the world during the age of the Baby Boomers, many churches and Christian organizations were established. In Hong Kong, Christian leaders became influential in society and Christian circles, contributing to an overall goodness and prosperity in the establishment of Hong Kong and the kingdom of God. Even today, their influence remains.

Under the British colonization before 1997, characteristics of Christian leaders in Hong Kong resembled what the western world categorized as the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and the Millennials.¹ The Baby Boomer Christian leaders of the 1960s and 1970s have typically been viewed as those with an essence of life described in “Below the Lion Rock.”² They tend to focus on faithfully sharing the gospel with many people, establishing unified churches, and building congregations who persevered

¹ Anna Johnstone, “GEN WHEN? Who are Millennials, Baby Boomers and Generation Z? Generation groups explained,” *The Sun*, UK edition, March 25, 2018, accessed June 22, 2018, <https://www.thesun.co.uk/fabulous/5505402/millennials-baby-boomers-generation-groups-z-y-x-explained/>. “Following World War II, there was a ‘baby boom,’ which gives this generation their nickname, and they are typically born between the early to side 1940s, to 1960-1964. . . . Following the baby boomers, Generation X are born between the early-to-mid 1960s, and the early 1980s. . . . [And the Millennials] are born between the early 1980s to the mid 1990s or early 2000s, [and] so many young adults nowadays would define themselves as millennials.”

² C. Yeung, “Lion rock,” *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong edition, March 3, 2003, retrieved March 19, 2015. “The theme song of Below the Lion Rock is a witness of the livelihood in the 1970s. . . . Of one mind in pursuit of our dream/ All discord set aside, with one heart on the same bright quest,/ Hand in hand to the ends of the Earth. . . ./ Fearless and valiant inside,/ Rough terrain no respite./ Side by side we overcome ills,/ As the Hong Kong story we write.”

in righteousness. The Generation X leaders of the 1970s and 1980s, strive to develop dialogues on meaning and teamwork, enjoy autonomy and innovative ways of work, and purpose to make a difference in the world.³ More recently, the Millennial Christians of the 1990s and 2000s look for those who can walk the walk, enjoy trying different things, network to collaborate, and seek therapeutic pleasure.⁴

If theologians and biblical scholars are critical to the development of Christianity, then Christian leaders are critical to the manifestation of what Christianity is. They complement one another in words and deeds, in ways of thought and ways of life. In light of the significant role Christian young leaders play in the church's future, this thesis-project studies the appropriate spiritual formation required for these young emerging leaders in Hong Kong.

The Emerging Generation of Young Leaders

After the turn of the millennium, apart from the full-time ministers, youth ministry in Hong Kong include many of the senior members of the youth fellowship who have been upgraded to being young leaders. In this thesis-project, the term “young leaders” refers to those Millennial Christians, ages seventeen to twenty-three, among whom one-third are second-generation Christians. As senior members, they assume various responsibilities in assisting the youth fellowship to operate. Their responsibilities

³ Coleen Lee, “Post 80s rebels with a cause,” *The Standard*, Hong Kong edition, June 20, 2010, accessed June 29, 2011. “People born post-1980s in Hong Kong are for the most part different from the same generation in mainland China.”

⁴ Wing-yuen Kwong, *Standing on the side of the egg: Hong Kong Post 80s 'Zhan zai dan de yibian: Xianggang bashibou'* (Hong Kong, UP Publications Limited, 2010), 16–32. “They are said to be ‘post-materialist’ in outlook, and they are particularly vocal in issues such as urban development, culture and heritage, and political reform. . . . Their discourse mainly develops around themes such as anti-colonialism, sustainable development, and democracy.”

include attending pre-study and hosting Bible study groups, arranging and leading worship, hosting fellowship committees, and organizing various social gatherings. Most of these young leaders are college or university students transitioning to become young working adults. These young leaders are themselves emerging adults who have their own specific developmental and spiritual needs that need to be addressed. Those needs will be considered in this chapter, along with the context of young leaders.

A Survey of Hong Kong Churches

In 2015, Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited (CRM) published its survey, *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*. This study of the various age groups in Hong Kong churches found that the dropout rate, most serious among youth, was nearly 50 percent more than the 2009 statistics.⁵

The concerns associated with the dropout rate revolving around three major life stages: the transitions to high school, college, and work.⁶ In high school, students deal with learning pressure and Internet addiction. In college, they wrestle with diverse ideologies and chaotic study timetables. The transition to work includes long working hours and financial burdens. Also, the dropout rate among second-generation Christians is high because most, being required by their parents to join the worship services and fellowship, have a half-hearted Christian faith.⁷

⁵ Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Research Team, *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*, ed. David C. W. Wu and Eric T. H. Lau (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited, 2016), 25-26. "The drop in participation as compared with 2009 at Sunday youth services was more than 30 percent, and 49.9 percent on Saturday."

⁶ *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*, 44. "The dropout rates during transitional times is 11.1% for high school, 18.5% for college, and 12.1% for work."

⁷ *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*, 44. "The percentage of dropout concerns [Hong Kong] churches have for the second generation is 13.7%."

The report also reflects various internal issues in the structure of the church's youth ministry.⁸ The church struggles with a limited number of youth pastors in the Christian population and suffers from a high turnover rate. Most youth pastors are not well-equipped for the ministry.⁹ Apart from the lack of youth ministers, there is also insufficient number of mature volunteer youth workers, as these adults also display a high dropout rate.

The Contextual Situation of Young Leaders

Young leaders were not factored into the survey results, even though they have become important stakeholders in youth ministry. These young leaders should receive more pastoral attention as “the hard-working farmer[s] who ought to have the first share of the crops” (2 Tim 2:6). One framework for considering the situation of young leaders is Jeffrey Arnett's proposal of a new phase of youth development called “Emerging Adulthood.” Arnett provides a new understanding of the unique dilemmas and developmental strides that face college students in their young adulthood. He describes the developmental needs of these “Emerging Adults” according to his psychosocial studies and Erikson's developmental theory (see the section Spiritual Formation for Identity Exploration for more information about Erikson). Regarding their “stage of identity exploration,” Arnett describes “the situation of instability [in] facing various changes,” being “attentive to one's own world, psychologically feeling in-between,” and enthusiasm about “possibilities

⁸ *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*, 44.

⁹ *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*, 47. “For ministers registered for extended studies on Youth Ministry, [there are] no data for 2009, and 24.8% for 2015.”

ahead.”¹⁰ A glimpse of the contextual situations of young leaders is given below to offer a better understanding of the picture.

The Developmental Context: Transitional From College to Work

Peggy Chan-So writes, “Although Chinese people in Hong Kong are quite westernized, the value of family is still a dominant concept influencing their behavior.”¹¹ And Stevan Harrell notes that the deep family structures remain patriarchal.¹² This developmental structure encompasses an attitude of family over others and a precise definition of relationships between in-group and out-group family members. Identity formation and development of self-differentiation are essential for young leaders. In contrast to the autonomous self that is encouraged in the western context of individualism, there is a broader definition of self in Chinese culture. Chan-So highlights this difference: “The Chinese self is not a separate entity . . . Chinese construction of self emphasizes the continuity of family, societal roles, the supremacy of hierarchical relationships, compliance with authority, and the maintenance of stability.”¹³

Most young leaders are in transition from school to work, and the desire to be formed as a distinctive identity increases as they move on to this stage of adulthood.

¹⁰ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 45. “Emerging adulthood as the age of identity explorations, the age of instability, the self-focused age, the age of feeling in-between, and the age of possibilities.”

¹¹ Peggy C. Y. Chan-So, “Validation of the Chinese Version of Differentiation of Self Inventory (C-DSI),” *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 41, no. 1 (January 2015): 96.

¹² Stevan Harrell, “Patriline, Patriarchy, Patrimony: Surface Features and Deep Structures in the Chinese Family System,” accessed February 4, 2017, <http://faculty.washington.edu/stevehar/PPP.html>.

¹³ Chan-So, “Differentiation of Self Inventory,” 96.

They are in the process of differentiation; according to Bowen, “to separate their intellectual and emotional functioning from that of the family,”¹⁴ as well as other significant people in their lives. They recognize the need to follow models; however, it is no longer a straightforward adaptation of attitude but a thoughtful acquisition of principles that come from their own assessment of what they want to be.

The Generational Context: The Millennials

Most of these young leaders were born just before the turn of the millennium. Neil Howe and William Strauss describe some characteristics of these Millennials:

- ✓ They are highly protected and grew up “sheltered from having to resolve their own conflicts as parents advocated on their behalf, and ‘spared’ them from unpleasant experiences.” “They may carry a sense of entitlement about them and have an expectation of frequent positive feedback.”
- ✓ They believe the community they are in “knows what is best for taking care of them.” Thus, they value the opinions of those in authority and “are more in line with their parents’ values than most other generations have been.” “They fear being considered [as] nonconformist” and try to perform accordingly.
- ✓ “They are group oriented rather than being individualists. They may sacrifice their own identity to be part of the team. They prefer egalitarian leadership, not hierarchies,” and enjoy “service learning and volunteerism.”

¹⁴ Herbert Goldenberg, and Irene Goldenberg, *Family Therapy: An Overview* (Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning, 2012), 603.

- ✓ “They think multitasking saves time and is a smart thing to do but are not usually aware of the poorer quality of results.” They may have lost a sense of spontaneity to work and to build on success. “They feel pressured to succeed, [as] they have been pushed hard to achieve, to avoid risks, and to take advantage of opportunities.”¹⁵

A study was completed among one of Hong Kong’s youth organizations in 2006 on how to respond to the needs of these Millennials. The study identified three ministerial directions: “initiation, independence, and intimacy.”¹⁶ Initiation is understood as an awareness of passivity and being able to focus on one’s intended development. Independence involves critical thinking and discernment, and intimacy develops compassion for those who are needy and creates space for self.

The Ethical Context: The Asian Christian

Nowadays, there is a motto among parents in China and Hong Kong on how to prepare the next generation for the education system: “Champion begins at the starting line.”¹⁷ The competition is no longer just academic, but it overflows to extracurricular activities and even preschool education. It is a myth that people believe that the more one is equipped, the higher the chance of getting into higher education, and the greater the probability of success in life. Life is becoming more competitive and performance-

¹⁵ Neil Howe and William Strauss, “Characteristics of the Millennial Generation,” *Millennials Go to College* (2003), accessed July 28, 2016, <https://students.rice.edu/images/students/AADV/OWeek2008AADVResources/Characteristics%20of%20the%20Millennial%20Generation.pdf>.

¹⁶ Lily Shum, “Breakthrough Interpersonal Ministry 2007 Annual Planning,” ministry notes, annual planning of Breakthrough Limited, May 5, 2006.

¹⁷ Centre for Child and Family Science, Education University of Hong Kong, “The Myth of Champion Begins at the Starting Line,” *Metro Daily Hong Kong*, accessed August 6, 2016, <http://www.metrohk.com.hk/index.php?cmd=detail&id=182076>.

based. It is easy to understand how people can become more vulnerable to rejection, indifference, demands, misunderstandings, and betrayals.

Why don't the youth rebel against such a consciousness? Ken Fong, executive director of Fuller Asian American Initiative, in his video "Exceedingly Fond," makes use of the elder brother in Luke 15: 11-32 to describe the Asian Christian worldview: "The father's affection toward him needs to be earned . . . His entire life revolves around how to please his father, hoping one day to receive the just reward. That's why he was outrageously angry at his brother's party and unable to see his father's fond love for him."¹⁸

Fong reflected that Asian next-generation Christians are more like the elder brother than the younger one. "No wonder we are often drained and serve without joy. No wonder we show no mercy to our younger ones when they are not as disciplined or [well-]behaved." Fong echoes the rest of Asian Christianity.

If this disposition is left unexamined, young leaders will adopt the same worldview during their spiritual formation process and produce generation after generation of those who are not convinced God is extremely fond of them. Rather, they will believe they need to work long and hard to perform, trying to persuade the Father that they are worth liking and loving. Relationships will degenerate into contracts, and people will seek to manipulate others to get what they think the others want. If these young leaders continue with such a disposition, they will miss not only the joys of knowing God but also the joys of life.

¹⁸ Ken Fong, "Exceedingly Fond: The Asian American Initiative at Fuller Theological Seminary," accessed August 6, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMkJEPiEtUU>.

The Sociological Context: Downward Mobilities

In recent years, young people in Hong Kong are showing signs of depression, disappointment, and despair as they find it increasingly difficult to move up the social ladder through their academic achievements and career development.

The education system has focused on competition in pursuit of higher levels of academic achievement that include getting good grades, hard work, involvement in extracurricular activities, and more. A college or university education is believed to be the one-way ticket to prosperity and success. Just as Howe and Strauss describe the achieving characteristics of the Millennial Generation; “youth miss the bigger picture of what college education is all about. They are pressured to decide early on a career and have been put on a career track since junior high school.”¹⁹ Their focus is more on the world of achievement rather than personal development or virtue of character.

A prosperous society with healthy social mobility allows a person to move to a social status other than the one in which he or she was born. A 2013 press release refers to a 2011 survey conducted by Hong Kong University’s Centre for Social and Political Development Studies. It reports that 52 percent of the respondents complained about a lack of opportunities for them to upgrade their social status, and more than 60 percent of the people in Hong Kong believed improving their standard of living was harder than it was ten years ago.²⁰ Those under thirty-one years of age, with a tertiary-level education, who were adolescents at the turn of the millennium, tended to be most

¹⁹ Neil Howe and William Strauss, “Characteristics of the Millennial Generation,” *Millennials Go to College* (2003), accessed July 28, 2016, <https://students.rice.edu/images/students/AADV/OWeek2008AADVResources/Characteristics%20of%20the%20Millennial%20Generation.pdf>.

²⁰ Kang-Chung Ng, “Social Mobility in Hong Kong Getting Harder,” *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong edition, March 5, 2013, accessed July 28, 2016, <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1177243/social-mobility-hong-kong-getting-harder-poll-says>.

pessimistic about their prospects of upward social mobility. The research director, Victor Zheng Wan-Tai, writes, “The government needs to do more to diversify the economy, where at present, we are too focused on tourism, finance, and retail.”

According to Angus Deaton, winner of the 2015 Nobel Prize in economics, “Better living is not just a matter of wealth, but also health — including emotional health; and the origin of inequality is socio-economic development: increasing the health and wealth divide.”²¹ This conclusion resonates with the latest public health issue in Hong Kong, in which depression and suicide are on the rise among adolescents.

Howard Gardner’s more recent books, *Good Work* and *Truth, Beauty and Goodness Reframed*, have attempted to integrate the concept of excellence with one’s vocation.²² Vocation and career pathfinding are more than a quest for purpose and meaning; they affirm where one’s talents are best applied.

The Tribal Context: The Heritage

Many youth pastors, Sunday school teachers, and fellowship counselors are first-generation Christians with numerous years of faith. These tribal elders place a higher priority on doctrinal truth than practicing faith, and the continuation of tradition is more important than the exploration of the Lord’s new things in this era, just as the Lord declared in the times of Isaiah. (See Isaiah 42.9; 48.6) They project a certain model of Christian identity and political stands for the tribal members to follow;

²¹ Angus Deaton, *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origin of Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), ix.

²² Howard E. Gardner, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and William Damon, *Good Work: When Excellence and Ethics Meet* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2001); Howard E. Gardner, *Truth, Beauty, and Goodness Reframed: Educating for the Virtues in the Age of Truthiness and Twitter* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2011).

evangelical rather than charismatic, orderly rather than improvisational, structural rather than organic.

The overall atmosphere of the Christian education displays a strong tribal atmosphere. And in particular, there is a high expectation on young leaders to display the appropriate model to carry on with the heritage the tribal elders hold onto.

The Cultural Context: Righteous Alliance

On September 26, 2014, the Australian Broadcasting Company reported about the “Umbrella Movement” in Hong Kong, is a demand for free and fair elections and a protest against the decision of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress of August 31.²³

Almost all university students in Hong Kong echoed the 2014 Hong Kong class boycott campaign and fully supported the Umbrella Movement. Many secondary schools established political reform concern groups to support student protests and the Umbrella Movement. “A responsibility that one needs to bear when you are born at the time of troubles,” was embedded into a popular Cantonese song, “Glamorous,” and it has become the motivating ethos of the movement ever since.²⁴

These students display the Millennial characteristics described by Howe and Strauss:

²³ Keri Phillips, “Tracing the History of Hong Kong’s Umbrella Movement,” Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Radio National, October 28, 2014, accessed August 10, 2016, <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/rearvision/tracing-the-history-of-hong-kong’s-umbrella-movement/5848312>.

²⁴ Suk-ping Chow, *Our Responsibilities* (Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2015), 21. “We are not born at time of troubles; however, being in troubled times is already a fact. We should not retreat and concern only our own, and ought not merely sitting around to declare justice and mercy are on our side.”

- ✓ “They are motivated, goal-oriented, and confident in themselves and the future.” They expect they will become great and “may brag their generation’s power and potential.”
- ✓ “They are assertive and believe they are right.” “It has been instilled in them that they are vital to the nation and their parents’ sense of purpose. They feel they are here to solve the world problems that older generations have failed to solve.”²⁵

They have a mission and vision for the future, but how deeply they see the issues, and how far they can go, are yet to be seen. There are many challenges ahead, and one thing is sure, the younger generation should not go alone on this journey. Instead, it requires a cross-generational connection to offer the right wisdom, affirmation, and guidance during the process.

Revisiting the Spiritual Needs of Young Leaders

The various contextual situations and external displacement of life reflect the many-sided internal spiritual needs of young leaders are being upset. Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.²⁶ (Proverbs 4:23) Spiritual life development together with the rest of the total being, including psychological, social, and physical development, changes over the course of a lifetime. The specific spiritual needs of young leaders at this particular transitional stage of life needs to be revisited before the appropriate focus of spiritual formation can be aligned.

²⁵ Howe and Strauss, “Characteristics of the Millennial Generation.”

²⁶ Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from English Standard Version.

The Performing Leader

Young leaders who are assuming various responsibilities in ministry display a “subtle issue of performance,” as mentioned by Keith Meyer, a specialist in soul care and spiritual formation, which is “about people pleasing their authorities, control and ambition.”²⁷ This orientation toward performance, which is obvious in the Asian ethnical context, is further affirmed when they are promoted according to the leadership structure. Most of these young leaders perform well in their academic and social arenas, just as they do in youth ministry. They are referred as the performing leader in this thesis-project. Unconsciously, they may be wearing performance masks as a false identity, hiding from their real selves, not knowing the kind of grace that could allow them to put away their masks and find worth in Christ rather than in success.

Professor Harry R. Lewis, the former dean of Harvard College, challenges those in higher education worldwide that their goal of scholarly excellence has been overshadowed. He writes, “The fundamental job of undergraduate education is to turn eighteen and nineteen-year-olds into twenty-one and twenty-two-year-olds, to help them grow up to learn who they are, to search for a larger purpose for their lives, and to leave college as better human beings.”²⁸

Performing leaders fear they will lose hold not only their purpose in life, as all the pursuits are merely responding to the call of others, but also the meaning of life, as all the effort spent may not contribute to finding significances in understanding one’s pathway.

²⁷ Keith Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” in *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation*, ed. Alan Andrews (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 150.

²⁸ Harry R. Lewis, *Excellence Without a Soul: Does Liberal Education Have a Future?* (New York, NY: Ingram Publisher, 2007), 2.

The Unhelped Helper

Young leaders developmentally are in transition to a new status, expanding their responsibilities, responding to calls of various identities, and trying to live a life of their own. Nonetheless, with all their mastery of life in the way of the church and how the world equips them, their engagement is only of instrumental value, while the human spirit is of their least concerns.

The human spirit may have plenty of obvious problems, such as relationships, competition, or addictions, but these problems can also be as bad as those who are habitual gossips, control freaks, or excessively angry. These unhealthy patterns in the lives of young leaders remain untouched. Sandra Wilson terms these young people “Unhelped Helpers,” as these people have never faced their childhood struggles and the scars connected to their life experiences in dysfunctional families. “They are less than helpful helpers because of their misbeliefs, inaccurate identities, disrespectful relating patterns, and distorted concepts of God.”²⁹ If these broken areas are not identified and dealt with, and remain below the surface, the brokenness of these young leaders can become undetected influences in their attempts to control others in response to the acquired deceitful expectations of life accumulated throughout their development.

While there are areas of desolation that lie below the surface of life and confusion within the heart of their being, it is essential for young leaders to confront their needs honestly. If they do not, these young leaders will continue to assume an

²⁹ Sandra Wilson, *Counseling Adult Children of Alcoholics* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1989), 268. Wilson is quoted in Keith Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation: Becoming the Change Your Church Needs* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 64.

identity expected by significant others, and this false identity will cause them to manifest unsettling behaviors, emotions, and thinking.

The Trapped Identity

Sometimes people wonder if pastoring occurs without spiritual formation. Many times, the pastoral role of spiritual formation in youth ministry has been overshadowed by the emphasis on traditional teachings and doctrinal rightness. The focus of churches is more on how to continue with the heritage, stability, niceness, and efficient operation, and how to effect expansion, rather than sharing the wisdom of life.

Young leaders are in the process of identity formation and discerning what their calling is. Currently, spiritual formation is more engaged with performance and political correctness. Instead of being a ministry based on an identity informed by what God has done and called for in Christ, the identity will be tied up with the general legalistic measures on what spiritual life should be. These measures include doing devotions and engaging in various spiritual displays, pursuing effective and efficient ministries, and offering sacrifices in term of what one can do for God.

Regardless of what real life is all about, the youth have a trapped identity, their passion will be lost, and their life motivation will be exhausted. When more and more of the demands have nothing to do with the intrinsic value and intention of the person, many young people may display symptoms of depression and suicide, or some may become radically rebellious.

Self-Focused Survivor

The identities of performing leader, unhelped helper, and trapped person reflect young leaders who are in the midst of searching for meaning, being, and the passion of life. These are the three fundamental questions the whole world is asking: why am I here, who am I, and where am I going? In the end, the spiritual needs of young leaders are about finding one's identity, recognizing one's brokenness, and relating one's faith to reality. These are life and spiritual issues, associated with both developmental growth and spiritual formation, rather than sociological or cultural issues. The issues that have been discussed thus far in this chapter are illustrated in figure 1.1.

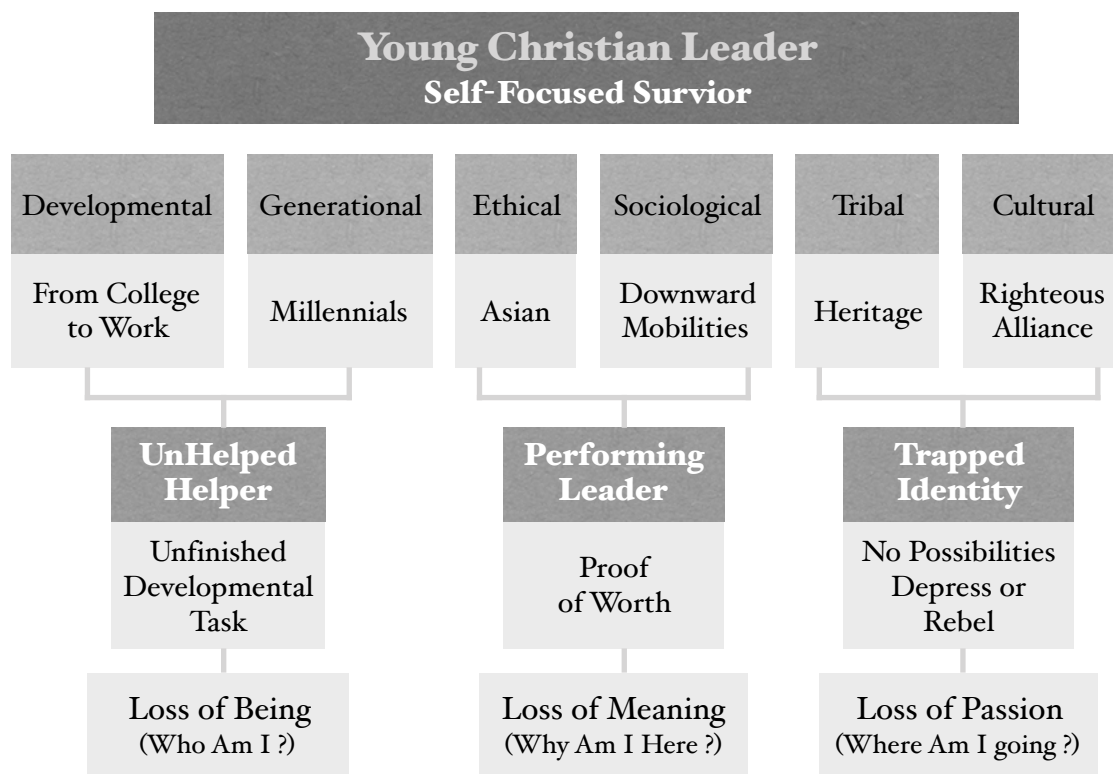


Figure 1.1. Influences on Young Christian Leaders

All these issues reflect a “self-focused survivor” orientation, as Arnett writes about “the goal of their self-focusing is self-sufficiency, learning to stand alone as a self-sufficient person.”³⁰ Is it about the development of the ego, with all its various competencies, such as language, logic, intelligence, and emotional quotient? How does ego development relate to spiritual formation?

The two axes of ego development and spiritual formation do intersect and complement one another. The primary aim of ego development is an adaptation to its physical, social, and cultural environment to maximize satisfaction and ensure survival. However, spiritual formation is in the service of ego development, both transforming and transcending it. Personal growth and spiritual formation are interrelated as part of the whole person’s biological, psychological, social, cultural, environmental, and spiritual integration.

James Loder describes the transcendent essence of the human spirit, saying, “it implies that with every new insight, the constructive act of imagination, and formation of new stages, a higher aim is beckoning, and that human nature belongs to a huger but hidden order.”³¹ Loder goes on to describe that when the human spirit finds its grounding in the divine spirit and seeks to be united with the presence and purposes of God, “subsequently the human spirit, in agreement with divine order, will seek to bring all the ego competencies into line with those purposes.”³² At this

³⁰ Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 13.

³¹ James E. Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 72.

³² Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 72.

moment of personal and spiritual transformation, the self-focused survivor would become the God-focused disciple.

This work of spiritual transformation exists in its own context, and there are gaps within the framework of spiritual formation. These topics will be examined in the next sections of this chapter.

The Context of Youth Work

Following the 2014 survey, Hong Kong CRM hosted a discussion forum, “Forward-looking of Pastoral Ministry as of the Latest Contextual Turbulence,” to draw various specialists to discuss the matter. During this forum, Hong Kong youth ministry spokesman Philemon Choi reflected on four challenges Hong Kong youth ministry is facing.³³ The next four sections of this chapter summarize Choi’s insights.

“Growth Without Depth”

When John Stott visited Hong Kong and was asked to evaluate the enormous worldwide growth of the evangelical church, he gave a three-word answer, “growth without depth.”³⁴ There is immense numerical growth in Hong Kong churches and youth work. However, there is no depth in the spiritual life of the youth during their participation in the ministry. One reason is that the spirituality provided to the

³³ Philemon Choi Yuen-wan, “How to Pastor This Continuing Dropout Emerging Generation: Integration of Spiritual Formation and Discipleship Training,” in *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*, ed. David C. W. Wu and Eric T. H. Lau (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited, 2016), 174-81.

³⁴ John R. W. Stott, *The Radical Disciple: Some Neglected Aspects of Our Calling* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 38: “summarize the Christian scene in the world today . . . I would sum it up in just three words — growth without depth.”

youth is church-based activities that have little or no relevance to their real-life experiences.

Life Mentoring

Cross-generational ministry and life mentoring are disappearing in church ministry. The discipleship model of Jesus emphasizes individual life mentoring, with a mentoring goal of guiding a disciple to be connected to and rooted in God. Paul resonates with this model, as is evident in his writing to the Philippians, “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us” (Phil 3:17). In the end, youth are not a problem to be solved but souls to be connected to God.

Radical Disciples

Choi also recognized there are very few committed disciples among the emerging generation. Existing practices of discipleship consist mainly of closed-door Bible studies. Nurturing a radical disciple involves an outward journey and engagement with the poor and their sufferings. Discipleship can be realized through loving neighbors. By all means, youth ministry is itself a ministry of neighboring to the neighborless, of friendliness to the friendless.

Vocational Pathfinding

The last challenge, but not the least, is helping youth find their vocation, so they can personally appropriate the mission of God and his kingdom as their own.

Disciples have their callings and missional purposes, according to one's God-given gifts, to enter the world and become a blessing to their city, for all tribes and all nations.

A Survey of Hong Kong Churches

CRM's 2014 survey reported that most pastoral programs were related to evangelism and church operations, with less than 15 percent related to personal growth and spiritual development.³⁵ Although there was spiritual formation, it was more related to understanding and reflecting on the Bible than to life. And the projection of future pastoral programs reported similar findings, with only 4 percent related to personal growth and spiritual development.³⁶

Spiritual formation is among the many central themes in Scripture. If there is no transformation in life, there is no change in life. If one neglects the internal struggles and tensions in life and takes a reactive approach toward external challenges, that person will gradually be trapped by the underlying problems and handicapped in handling internal conflicts, and chaos will emerge and grow. Along with this line of thought, Choi encourages a focus on the aspects of life and spirituality of the youth and young leaders, instead of on idealistic functional or theological perspectives.

³⁵ *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*, 48. "Pastoral programs in 2014: new believer (77%), bible studies (70%), personal evangelism (64%), worship (50%), discipleship (48%), Sunday school (25%), spiritual formation (34%), personal growth (16%), spiritual growth (6%)"

³⁶ *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*, 49. "Pastoral programs identified as priority in the future: discipleship (48%), evangelical bible studies (46%), evangelism (45%), bible studies (36%), worker training (35%), theology (6%), spiritual caring (4%)."

Revisiting the Ministry Gap in Youth Work

Many youth ministries talk about reform, and many improvements refer to structural changes or revised practices. Preferably, the reformation should be the renewal of the mind and life, relevant to the individual situation of the youth leaders. The ultimate focus still resides on spiritual growth regarding formation, conformation, and transformation. (See Galatians 4:19; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18) The formation is in the likeness of Christ, becoming more visible in the being of young leaders. The conformation to the faith of the community of saints should display meaningful purposes in following the will of God. The transformation should result in more passion under the guidance of the Spirit to live lives for the missional purpose. Such a process should not only be an ego formation and personal growth development but also a means of divine encountering and life renewal.

Spiritual Formation for Identity Exploration

Erik Erikson's developmental psychology looked at eight developmental stages from infancy to adulthood, with the adolescent phase characterized by a struggle between identity and role confusion. With this in mind, many young leaders display late adolescent characteristics. They wrestle over self-concepts within their social contexts and struggle with a consistent sense of being one's self. Many are living in a reality of role confusion. As Erikson describes, this role confusion can be resolved gradually as the adolescent begins to discover his philosophy of life, involving ideals

and values.³⁷ On the contrary, role confusion can grow when a person is persuaded by society to live according to its expectations.

Loder contributes a theological understanding, instead of focusing on personal philosophy or social influences. He says that the human spirit from birth is in the process of discovering its identity (who one is) in the “Face of God” (who God is); to “know your whole nature” and be “transformed into beholding Christ’s presence.”³⁸ During his study on Loder’s approach Gushiken highlights that a person who has not been persuaded to live according to the ideals and values of the Spirit will instead identify with that of the culture, allowing role confusion to continue.³⁹ Gushiken continues, “If these crises of diffusion are evaluated by means of reflection and introspection, it becomes possible to open the door to the spiritual formation by understanding oneself through the lens of God.”⁴⁰ On the contrary, if the person refuses to be persuaded by the Spirit and attempts to cope with these crises of diffusion only, there may be further separation from the influence of the transforming Spirit. These young leaders will remain in the spiritual state of a self-focused survivor.

There are three primary deficiencies of youth development in youth ministry. First, youth ministries attempt to shape youth according to the church culture, rather

³⁷ Erik H. Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York, NY: Norton, 1995), 598-610.

³⁸ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 121. “On a psychological level, appropriation of the Spiritual Presence of Christ is like imprinting on a human face in order to know your whole nature what species you belong to; but in human beings, imprinting refers to the specific, material contours of a human face. In theological terms, imprinting is transformed into beholding or ‘seeing’ Christ’s presence. This is similar to but profoundly different from being gripped by the presence of a charismatic figure.”

³⁹ Kevin M. Gushiken, “Nurturing Spiritual Identity Formation in Youth Curriculum from the Theological-Psychological Approach of James Loder,” *Christian Education Journal* series 3, vol. 7, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 324. “In contrast, role confusion is the diffusion that occurs when a person is persuaded by society to live according to its expectations rather than those of the Spirit. Role confusion diminishes as a person begins to discover his personal philosophy of life with its ideals and values.”

⁴⁰ Gushiken, “Nurturing Spiritual Identity Formation,” 323.

than nurture them. Second, they neglect the present developmental issues. Third, they miss opportunities to facilitate faith formation at teachable moments during the state of identity “dis-equilibration.”⁴¹ These approaches produce the spiritual characteristics of the unhelped helper among young leaders, in which their developmental needs and spiritual urges have not been addressed.

Most life growth occurs not at stages but between stages. Loder writes, “It is the pattern of new life by which we make disordered things make sense; it is the dynamic order by which we construct fixed or stable orders; it is the process by which we compose content.”⁴² Fowler also observes, “God designed these years of transition from adolescence to adulthood to be an opportune life phase where faith can begin to take shape.”⁴³ Young leaders are in a critical phase of their formation; the dis-equilibration crises can give opportunities to encounter the reality of God’s presence during their transition from college youth to working young adults.

Spiritual Formation for Wholistic Spirituality

In Matt 5:48, Jesus says, “You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” However, due to the secular influence of the broader culture, many contemporary ministries no longer expect significant life change beyond conversion. Such perfecting, as in a progression in holiness, is no longer expected in life. Many

⁴¹ Gushiken, “Nurturing Spiritual Identity Formation,” 321. “It is necessary for adolescents to experience a time in their lives where they struggle over self-concept, are not sure who they are, and begin a pursuit for the real me. This dis-equilibration typically occurs in middle adolescence as young people encounter pressure to conform to the expectations of different social context.”

⁴² James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment: Understanding Convictional Experiences*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers & Howard, 1989), 128.

⁴³ James W. Fowler, “Perspectives on Adolescents, Personhood, and Faith,” *Family Ministry* 13 (September 1999), 22-32.

have given up on a life free of worry, lust, anger, contempt, gossip, and greed. The life Jesus presented in the Sermon on the Mount is not considered viable, and the general impression of today's youth echoes the Jamaican singer Bob Marley's lyrics, "He's not perfect, you aren't either, and the two of you will never be perfect." These lyrics have certain parallels to the Christian saying, "Christians aren't perfect, just forgiven."⁴⁴

However, a search for meaning in life continues as young leaders seek fulfillment, often defusing an inner sense of nothingness by completing activities labeled as spiritually meaningful. Regrettably, many young leaders consider regular devotions and busy Christian services to be the criteria by which they are evaluated. They are told that these practices are the pathway to spiritual contentment. They are more concerned with spiritual practices and involvement in church than the quality of character, relationships, or the fruits produced by the Spirit. They are taught that the disciplines and church activities make up the spiritual life, and practicing these spiritual activities will bring a depth in spirituality.

Loder recognizes the achievement addiction is a fundamental violation of the self-transcendence of the human being: "The empty self, in its separateness from its Source, constantly drives achievers to higher achievement with every new sense of emptiness."⁴⁵ Young leaders will always have difficulty composing out of or covering over the nothingness. Further, engagement in religious activities does not alleviate emptiness. As Loder emphasizes, the "untransformed self" awaits transformation by the love and grace of God.

⁴⁴ Jeremy Myers, "Stop Saying Christians Aren't Perfect," *Redeeming God: Rescuing Scripture, Theology, and Church from the Shackles of Religion*, accessed August 10, 2016, <https://redeeminggod.com/Christians-arent-perfect/>.

⁴⁵ Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 82.

The irony is that achievers refuse to accept any sense of grace that they have not earned, and moreover, they cannot allow themselves to receive any more love than they feel they deserve. This is ironic because love establishes worth quite apart from what the beloved deserves. Earned love is not love but only as a reward, while grace must be accepted as a gift if it is to be received at all. This is merely the spiritual traits of the performing leader.

To ignore real-life matters, believing religious activities to be the spiritual life, betrays the assumption that one does not need to consider the rest of one's life as requiring transformation. This prevents young leaders from moving to their inner being. From this perspective, a young leader's real inner life and his church life are two different categories, as if he is living in what Meyer has termed a "double life."⁴⁶ This is similar to Carl Rogers's conception of self, wherein the "perceived self, real self, and ideal self can be incongruent with each other."⁴⁷

The very real and inner parts of young leaders, such as rage, lust, control, people pleasing, worry, and fear, are removed from God's reach. Consequently, such removal ends in incongruence and disconnection from one's self, others, and God. This is a spiritual trait of the unhelped helper. Without confession of these incongruences, and a desire for transformation, a young leader is left with the same sinful habits continuously manifesting themselves within his own life, among his interactions with others, and during his role of leading.

⁴⁶ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 41.

⁴⁷ Stanton L. Jones and Richard E. Butman, *A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal: Modern Psycho-Therapies* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 258.

Spiritual Formation for Missional Disciples

The transmission of a new life in Christ is supposed to be the imitation of Christ and the practice of a living faith. Among most evangelicals, it is reduced to a weakened understanding of discipleship, which focuses only on conversion of faith according to doctrinal beliefs, and in some cases conversion is in name only. A recent survey presented by the Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism points out, “The discipleship program is disconnected from building up kingdom perspectives and has been too inward focused on internal church growth only.”⁴⁸ It also states, “Discipleship has not been able to connect with, retain and build youths.”

Richard Lovelace, a historian as well as a theologian, has identified this gap in evangelical theology as “experiencing a hole in life,” and he termed it “the sanctification gap.”⁴⁹ Sanctification is the process of spiritual formation, becoming progressively more like Christ by cooperating with the guidance of the Spirit. The gap falls between God’s initial work of justification and his final work of glorification.

Meyer realizes salvation has been reduced to a kind of deal with God, writing, “The call to obedience or a different way of living is left to another track or discipleship program that in effect makes obedience optional.”⁵⁰ Even worse, Meyer highlights that the spirituality of these discipleship programs is “usually defined in terms of developing habits of going to church and daily devotions, not significant

⁴⁸ Ng Chong Hin, “Global Chinese Churches Mission and Discipleship,” survey presented by Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism, Hong Kong, November 11, 2016.

⁴⁹ Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 232-37.

⁵⁰ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 28.

character growth. Following Jesus into a radically transformed way of living is not part of the program.”⁵¹

This reduced expectation of transformation comes from a reduced gospel many churches offer. This reduction is particularly the effect of many seeker-sensitive churches and megachurches, in which the focus is on effective and efficient approaches to converting nonbelievers to correct Christian doctrine, taking for granted the faith experience and life transformation. Believers are trapped in an identity as self-focused survivors, rather than God-focused saints.

Loder emphasizes his final interpretation of such spiritual formation as “an eruption of new being in the presence of the imminent void, a manifestation of the abundance with which being-itself supplies the deepest needs of human being.”⁵² He continues, explaining, “When serenity comes up out of anxiety, joy out of depression, hope out of hopelessness; when good in return for evil, forgiveness replaces retaliation, and courage triumphs over fear; then we recognize the movement of something beyond the personality and mental health.”⁵³

There is a compelling “sense of an ending” that drives people toward completion. “The transcendent relationship of the Spiritus Creator to every aspect of human experience,” as Loder describes it, is providing “the guiding pattern of the human spirit” that generates something that is spiritually satisfying.⁵⁴ Loder sees that such

⁵¹ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 29.

⁵² Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 87.

⁵³ Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 89.

⁵⁴ Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 153. “Given the pervasiveness of transformation in human development and creativity, its reflection of the pattern of Spiritus Creator, and its transcendent relationship to every aspect of human experience, it is now clear why it may be called the guiding pattern of the human spirit.”

ultimate significance of transformation is not given with its roots in development, but in its expression as “Spiritus Creator,” by which all proximate conversions are to be finally transformed into what one is supposed to be created for.

Spiritual Life Development for Young Leaders

Statement of the Problem

The participant of this thesis-project is the Hong Kong Christian young leader who is in a transition from study to work. The problems are related to the spiritual needs of young leaders as constrained to being a performing leader, an unhelped helper, in a trapped identity, and ultimately a self-focused survivor. These problems reveal a ministry deficiency of spiritual formation in the areas of identity exploration, wholistic spirituality, and missional discipleship. Thus, the purpose of this thesis-project is to evaluate the vital spiritual life development essences and approach to facilitate spiritual growth in respect to the spiritual needs of young leaders and the ministry gaps of the youth work mentioned above.

The Position of this Thesis-Project

Spiritual theology involves the task of drawing out the spiritual and existential implications of biblical and systematic theology, in order to better understand and participate in the process of real life transformation. It is interdisciplinary by integrating the scriptural teaching on sanctification and spiritual growth with the believer’s actual life experience. Therefore, the focus of this thesis-project is not solely a theological discussion on the spiritual formation gaps in youth ministry, but it also

focuses on future spiritual life development related to the spiritual needs of young leaders, looking for a practical way forward.

Three interdisciplinary approaches suggested by Evan Howard,⁵⁵ as listed by John Coe, outline the overall discussion framework in this thesis:

- ✓ The Descriptive approach in this chapter revisits the problem and its setting, making use of the historical, phenomenological, and sociological aspects, to analyze the context of the disorientation. The spiritual needs of young leaders and ministry gaps of youth work are identified.
- ✓ The Normative approach in chapter 2 restates the essences of spiritual formation in the ministry for young leaders, marking use of the biblical, theological, and psychological aspects, to review the details of spiritual reorientation. Spiritual depth in response to the ministry gaps of youth work is discussed.
- ✓ The Relational approach in chapters 4 and 5 reinitiates the journey of spiritual life development for young leaders, making use of the applied, personal, and communal aspects, to re-imagine the structure and means of spiritual life development. The spiritual growth markers in response to the spiritual needs of young leaders are narrated.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Evan B. Howard, *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality*, Gloucester, United Kingdom: Brazos Press, 2008.

⁵⁶ John H. Coe, "Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality," in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 37. "Howard recommends a cautious interdisciplinary approach that looks at (1) biblical-theological-philosophical-normative issues, (2) historical-phenomenological-human scientific-descriptive issues, and (3) personal-applied-social-relational issues."

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Restating the Essences of Spiritual Formation for Young Leaders

Theologically, spiritual formation has to do with the foundational biblical pillars of transformation into the “fullness of Christ,” as “we are his workmanship which God prepared beforehand.” (Ephesians 4:13; 2:10) This is why Kenneth Boa stresses, “The Christian paradigm of spiritual life is of the biblical vision, as a redemptive relationship with the living and personal Creator of all things.”¹ During the Age of Enlightenment, the meaning broadened to include mental aspects of life, and in the modern era, spirituality grew to involve humanistic inquiry, with particular attention given to developmental psychology and faith development.

In the present postmodern times, there is a growing desire in Christianity for an authentic spirituality that looks at life in an integrated and purposeful way. The spiritual journey is considered to be personal and corporate: a personal dimension through transformational growth, and a corporate dimension through relational community. And the journey is conceived to be inward and outward: an inward journey of spiritual formation toward a redemptive relationship in Christ and with others, and an outward journey of vocational pathfinding in search of one’s missional purposes in God’s workmanship.

Despite the diversity of Christian spirituality, specific recurring dynamics become apparent, and Glen Scorgie summarizes three: the transformational dynamic concerns

¹ Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 21.

the renewal of holiness and the healing of wounds, the relational dynamic concerns friendship with God and experiencing community, and the vocational dynamic concerns the discovering of purposeful meaning and the gift of a personal calling.² This echoes what Keith Meyer believes the reduced Christian life has missed in connection to a living relationship with the Holy One, a community of shared trust and faith,³ and an obedient discipleship in which one is called to different ways of living.⁴

Scorgie's three dynamics, which are vitally connected, overlapped, and interdependent of each other, are borrowed to focus the following discussion. Nonetheless, the spiritual needs of young leaders and deficient ministries of spiritual formation remain the focus for this thesis-project.

Transformational Growth for Identity Exploration

This discussion focus is in response to the spiritual formation gap of identity exploration by young leaders at their critical stage of a motivated search for identity. "While we were created holy and whole, . . . our sin has damaged the wholeness. Christ is purifying and healing our true selves. The goal is the transformation of the inner command center of one's being."⁵ This thesis-project takes a psychodevelopmental approach,

² Glen G. Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality : Three Dimensions of Life with God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 21-38, cited in Glen G. Scorgie, "Overview of Christian Spirituality," in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 29-30.

³ Keith Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation: Becoming the Change Your Church Needs* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 27. "So did the fact that we were reducing salvation to a kind of 'deal' with God rather than a relationship with him and a community of believers."

⁴ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 28. "The call to obedience or a different way of living is left to another tract or discipleship program that in effect makes obedience optional."

⁵ Scorgie, "Overview of Christian Spirituality," 29-30.

from a theological anthropology perspective, in pursuit of transformational dynamic to reorient the identity of young leaders who are exploring the meaning of life in Christ.

Relational Community for Wholistic Spirituality

This discussion focus is in response to the spiritual formation gap of a wholistic spirituality in young leaders during the critical stage of transitioning into the next stage of young adulthood. “While we are created for community, . . . our sin has produced alienation. Christ is restoring our intimacy with God, others, and nature. The impulse of this dynamic moves vertically and horizontally, while the Scriptures articulate great importance to the relationship with God.”⁶ This thesis-project takes a psychosocial approach, from an ecclesiological community perspective, in pursuit of the relational dynamic as a spiritual formation platform for young leaders who are going through personal renewal during their life transition.

Vocational Pathfinding for Missional Discipleship

This discussion focus is in response to the spiritual formation gap of missional discipleship for young leaders who are at the critical stage of realizing the call to be a real follower of Christ. “While we were created for joyful participation in the image and purposes of God, . . . sin has made our existence seem futile. Christ is rebuilding purpose and meaning into our lives. The call is following the heart of God and the servanthood of Christ into the world.”⁷ This thesis-project will take a biblical approach, from an eschatological missional perspective, in pursuit of the vocational dynamic to

⁶ Scorgie, “Overview of Christian Spirituality,” 29-30.

⁷ Scorgie, “Overview of Christian Spirituality,” 29-30.

identify a missional disciple development model for young leaders who are unfolding their passions as the next generation of disciples for Christ.

Transformational Growth for Identity Exploration

Hindrances to Identity Exploration (Problem Anthropology)

Without a doubt, every youth ministry considers itself involved in spiritual formation; however, the lives of young leaders seem to be fragmented, displaying the spiritual needs of performing, being unhelped, and being trapped. What are the hindrances that prevent the spiritual lives of young leaders from going deep and far?

Why Perform What One Is Performing?

Self-image in young leaders is among their highest concerns. Self-image may consist of three types: how the individual sees oneself, how others see the individual, and how the individual perceives others see him. This understanding is why young leaders desire to earn acceptance and affirmation from others in order to assure their worthiness. In this respect, the self-image of young leaders is inevitably shaped by the attitudes and opinions of their parents, peers, and society. Regrettably, cultural and social norms deliver messages to young leaders that their worthiness is determined by their accomplishments, and directs them to pursue significance through how they perform.

If young leaders remain in such an existential worldview, and they perceive that they are worthless, inadequate, or not good enough, their behavior will manifest a drive to do more to justify their existence. Boa raises an enlightening question, “Why

do we do what we do?” In response, he encourages an alternative: “If we choose to acknowledge the truth of Scripture, we will begin to see God and ourselves in a new light.”⁸ The “new light” of Scripture says our worth is determined by what Christ was willing to do for us; who we are in Christ is not shaped by what we do, but by what Christ did on the cross, and by what he continues to do in our lives. Our performance does not determine our identity; instead, it is our new identity in Jesus that should become the basis for what we do. Then, life can be established in authentic living, as God intended.

The existential worldview and the new light have different motivators. Boa states the motivators of the existential worldview are worldly or temporal since they are related to the short-term dynamics of the visible and the now. By contrast, Boa suggests, motivators for the new light are biblical since they relate to the long-term dynamics of the invisible and the not yet.⁹ Different motivational structures produce different destinies for the spiritual journey. Guiding young leaders to discover their motivating factors in Christ is crucial, particularly during their transition to the adult world.

Why Not Being Helped with What a Helper Needs?

Meyer stresses that the spiritual transformation should aim for the wholeness of life, including physical, mental, soulful, social and spiritual. “It is a continual process of transforming the whole person, including the healing of woundedness and rebellion,

⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 144.

⁹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 128. “No other options, Fear, Love and Gratitude, Rewards, Our Identity in Christ, Purpose and Hope, Longing for God.”

by the power of God.”¹⁰ When doing youth ministry, many are inclined to prohibit young leaders from encountering what lies deep, afraid to confront the disturbed and disgraceful soul who may present difficulties they are unable to handle. Given that many ministers run far from problems of their own, they may not want to handle others’ unwanted problems. This behavior echoes what David describes in Ps 139: people are afraid to be searched, and they flee to hide in their darkness.

The journey of a human being is a process of experiencing life changes in relationships, physical maturation, sufferings, goals, desires, and hopes. Meyer highlights that many people have been taking their “‘real life’ and ‘spiritual life’ as two different categories,”¹¹ but it is the wholeness of life young leaders are experiencing. The spiritual journey for the young leader should involve going through all these struggles, experiencing togetherness with God and his guidance.

Why Not Be Whom One Should Be?

Biblical metaphors for the development of spiritual life focus on a lifetime of growth: training for a race (the metaphor for Paul himself and Timothy), wandering in the wilderness (the Israelites in the book of Exodus), healing of woundedness (Joseph in the book of Genesis), and recovery from rebellion (the book of Judges). In contrast to the Scriptures, the primary solutions of modern culture are, as Meyer highlights, “being those of quick fixes based on techniques, tools, and programs.”¹² By going the way of human culture, people tend to get things done in the quickest and simplest

¹⁰ Keith Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” in *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation*, ed. Alan Andrews (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 139.

¹¹ Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” 146.

¹² Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” 139.

ways, which concern less the development of the human soul. Dawn describes a hopelessness that arises in our culture: “we have placed our hopes in how much better things will be if they are faster,”¹³ and forgets to recognize “the most important reason for going from one place to another is to see what’s in between.”¹⁴ Human life is a journey requiring truthfulness in going through the experiences of lifelong changes and struggles in order to facilitate the process of awareness and awakening of the human soul.

If young leaders are unfaithful to their true selves, they will take up their inauthentic false selves and respond to religious consciousness accordingly. What happens when they transit into young adulthood and continue to be unfaithful to their true self? Parker Palmer gives a description: “We will extract a price from others. We will make promises we cannot keep, build houses from flimsy stuff, conjure dreams that devolve into nightmares, and other people will suffer — if we are unfaithful to true self.”¹⁵

Consideration of Identity Exploration in Christ

For life transformation into Christlikeness, our false selves must be abandoned, and our false identities are to be forsaken. The old self is consistently engaged in a persistent effort to preserve its self-referenced structure of being, which Paul refers to as “life according to the flesh.” Young leaders are called to deny this pervasive

¹³ Marva J. Dawn, *Unfettered Hope: A Call to Faithful Living in an Affluent Society* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 15.

¹⁴ Dawn, *Unfettered Hope*, 16

¹⁵ Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 31.

structure, and according to Paul, “walk not according to the flesh” but “according to the Spirit.” (Romans 8:4-7) Wright sees the orientation of man as not only to glorify God and enjoy him forever but also as toward creation with a telos to make it flourish. Thus, “Christian virtue”¹⁶ should be seen in light of transformational renewal and the eschatological future according to the gospel of Christ. Wright values the Pauline process of mind renewal; believers must change their old self’s way of thinking to reflect that Christ is the true king, and they must embrace their role in his kingdom. Wright refers to the Pauline renewing of the mind: “It is a vital ingredient within a genuinely human existence, . . . without which the whole scheme simply won’t function.”¹⁷

Paul Hiebert states, “Conversion to Christ must encompass three levels: behavior, beliefs and the worldviews that underlie these.”¹⁸ In general, Catholicism stressed sacramental and behavioral displays during previous centuries, while during recent decades, Protestants and evangelicals have emphasized the need for confessional beliefs as essential to Christian conversion. From traditional Catholic to contemporary evangelical, young leaders have been put under schemes of practices, that living a life before God involves certain ethical behaviors of the body as defined by the religious

¹⁶ N.T. Wright, *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2010), ix. “In the present book I seek to develop this theme (Christian responsibilities in and for the world) much further, with particular attention to the notion of Christian ‘character’ and ‘virtue.’ The basic point is this: Christian life in the present, with its responsibilities and particular callings, is to be understood and shaped in relation to the final goal for which we have been made and redeemed.”

¹⁷ Wright, *After You Believe*, 148. “First, it is a vital ingredient within a genuinely human existence, so that to leave it out — as many, sadly, seem to want to do — is to collude with what is at best as a semi-human state. Second, it is the ingredient without which this whole scheme simply won’t function. I refer to the mind. ‘Be transformed,’ urges Paul, ‘by the renewing of your mind.’” See Romans 12.2.

¹⁸ Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 11. “Worldview refers to underlying explicit beliefs, an in-depth level that shapes the categories and logic with which people think, the way they view reality, and the way to behave in it.”

tradition, and certain conceded conviction of the mind as defined by the slender doctrine. If ever such preferences continue to dominate as the ways for Christian, before young leaders could be engaged in life according to the Spirit, they would have already been absorbed into these preferences and trapped in a reliance on performance and in inauthenticity. Hiebert is convinced, “If the worldview is not transformed, in the long run, the gospel is subverted, and the result is a syncretistic Christo-paganism, which has the form of Christianity but not its essence.”¹⁹ Worldview is the underlying explicit beliefs, a more in-depth level that shapes the categories and logic with which people think, the way they view reality, and the way to behave in it. Merely changing specific behaviors and mindfulness are not sufficient to facilitate transformational growth.

Loder highlights three aspects of the self: the phenomenon of self-reflection, the self in self-relatedness, and the self-as-spirit. Self-reflection is “not merely knowing that one is a human being, it is knowing what is human and what is not human. . . . the key to the self lies in unpacking the ‘I.’”²⁰ Self-relatedness is “a relation that relates itself to itself, the knowing within oneself and together with another self-reflecting person.”²¹ Self-as-spirit “itself expresses the nature of being-

¹⁹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 11.

²⁰ James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment: Understanding Convictional Experiences*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers & Howard, 1989), 77-78.

²¹ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 78-79. “It is knowing within and together with oneself. This is the self that has chosen itself and in that choice determined to be itself, in, but not of, its ‘worlds’; in, but not of, its embodiment; ‘having’ but not ‘being had.’” (79). “When you are encountered by another self-reflecting person whose presence gives evidence that he or she has taken our sense of ‘I’ and put it into a reflective process of his or her own, then the potentiality for unpacking your own ‘I’ is awakened.” (78).

itself as grounded in the power that posits it, letting itself flourish as well as others.”²²

The identity exploration of young leaders needs to go beyond the developmental identity formation process.

Wendell Berry has an enlightening reflection on the body and soul: “Genesis 2:7 does not imply man is composed of body and soul but rather man is a soul composed of dust and the breath of God.”²³ People have been treating life compartmentally, and they have not taken it as a whole, allowing the “breath of God” to go deep into their being to transform “dust” to “living soul.” For life transformation to go deep, the breath of God needs to reach deep into the humanness, into the worldview of young leaders, into the way they understand life. Anthropologist Michael Kearney writes, “A worldview comprises images of Self and of all that is recognized as Not-Self, plus ideas about relationships between them, as well as other ideas.”²⁴ This requires some notion of integration, such that the breath of God can gradually be inhaled and absorbed into the innermost, and Hiebert highlights a few of them:²⁵

- ✓ how to acquire an understanding of the Self and the Soul
- ✓ how to relate the Self and Not-Self other
- ✓ how to classify perceived realities to deal with
- ✓ how to explain experiences regarding causes and effects

²² Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 79. “The self is itself when it expresses the nature of being-itself as that which ‘lets be’ or lets flourish.’ The self is grounded in the power that posits it when it lets the being of others flourish. In less abstract terminology, the self is truly itself in the ongoing act of giving love.”

²³ Wendell Berry, *Sex, Economy, Freedom and Community: Eight Essays* (New York, NY: Pantheon, 1993), 106.

²⁴ Young Hee Kim, “Relationship Between World View and Religion,” *Global Christian Centre*, accessed July 29, 2016, <http://globalchristiancenter.com/bible-and-theology/systematic-theology/24569-relationship-between-world-view-and-religion>.

²⁵ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 20.

- ✓ how to relate space in life: geographical, personal, sacred, moral, heaven, hell
- ✓ how to relate time in life: past, present, and future

It is not about the developmental formation, but rather an orientation reformation, which begins with an honest reflection on one's true condition. In the sixteenth century, Teresa of Ávila, a Spanish mystic, already recognized that a "journey toward God is also a movement into self-knowledge in the light of God."²⁶ It is never a self-improvement strategy. The transformation process starts by a paradigm shift on how people think about themselves, and such a renewal is God's work accomplished through the indwelling Spirit of Christ implanted within them and across their lifetime.

Transformational Growth for the Fragmented Life

Identity Exploration: From Self-Focused to Otherness-Focused

As Jeffrey Arnett describes, "Identity formation began in adolescence but intensified in emerging adulthood."²⁷ Among the many possibilities explored by young leaders in pursuit of their identity, the most central are love, work, and worldview.²⁸ The pursuit of love tends to involve a deeper level of intimate relationships with others, and the exploration of work, a deeper level of purpose and meaning with one's satisfaction. Worldview refers to beliefs and values held to make sense of

²⁶ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 73-86.

²⁷ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens Through the Twenties* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 9.

²⁸ Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 165. "The third pillar of identity, along with love and work, involves developing an ideology, a worldview, a way of making sense of the world. Erikson used the term "ideology" (Erikson, 1968), but he conceded that this term has pejorative connotations he did not intend. "Worldview" has come into use more recently (e.g., Jensen, 1997)."

the world,²⁹ what Hill and Pargament describe as the “search for the sacred,”³⁰ highlighting the active quest of humans to discover the divine or ultimate truth within their developmental contexts. In the end, the underlying worldview becomes one of the driving factors for how one sees oneself, others, and the rest of the world.

There is no time of life as self-focused as in the period of emerging adulthood. Arnett writes, “By focusing on themselves, emerging adults develop skills for daily living, gain a better understanding of themselves, and begin to build a foundation for their adult lives.”³¹ There is nothing wrong with being self-focused during emerging adulthood; rather, it is normal, healthy, temporary, and accompanied by serious self-reflection. Many youth ministries tend to focus on survival skills and future preparation, except that neither of these allows adequate self-reflection and exploration for identity formation. In fact, these approaches tend to “impose an identity onto the adolescent rather than allowing for discovery.”³²

This transitional moment from school to work is a crucial time for young leaders. It can help young leaders clear their role confusion, clarify their identity, explore what they want out of life, and set their courses right before launching into the next stage of life.

²⁹ See also the discussion in the section Consideration of Identity Exploration in Christ.

³⁰ Peter C. Hill and Kenneth I. Pargament, “Advances in the Conceptualization and Measurement of Religion and Spirituality,” *American Psychologist* 58, no.1 (2003): 64-74.

³¹ Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood*, 13.

³² Laura E. Berk, *Exploring Lifespan Development* (New York, NY: Allyn and Bacon, 2007), 316.

- ✓ In the present moment, young leaders are at a crossroad of advancing to a different stage of life; thus, they need to reflect upon the kind of motivators they have been counting on in driving life forward.
- ✓ In their past, young leaders have gone through much personal growth and many spiritual experiences; yet, they seldom take time to review their histories and allow the divine encounter to reframe their understanding of life.
- ✓ For their future, it is essential to help young leaders understand who they are and their identity in Christ; in this way, a foundation can be laid for future decisions in setting one's path of life in Christ.

It is vital to encourage personal reflection, journaling, consecration, or submission to allow young leaders to begin to encounter God personally. By nurturing a discipline of reflection, young leaders can embrace faithfulness in a devastating world, cultivate a divine perspective for life, and acquire a submissive trust for an unknown future.

The Present Moment: Motivate for Higher Purpose

Young leaders, in their transition from school to work, are motivated to examine their lives with higher purposes and weighted meanings, and to begin anew. It is a moment of re-engagement, an opportunity for spiritual refreshment, and a time to build up spiritual formational discipline for life.

Various motivators drive life forward, and Boa uses “vertical and horizontal motivators”³³ to describe their differences in nature. Horizontal motivators include “fear of loss, guilt, pride, personal gain, reputation, prestige, and pleasure.” Vertical motivators include “admit[ting] human inadequacy, fear of God, love and gratitude, rewards from above, identity in Christ, purpose and hope, longing for God.”³⁴

It is not surprising that most young leaders find it easier to be prompted by horizontal motivators than by vertical motivators. People are motivated to meet their needs for security, significance, and fulfillment, But they turn to the wrong places to have their needs met. “They turn, but not upward, they are like a deceitful bow.” (Hosea 7:16) These problems are internal human conditions, and the only solution is a new heart. In Christ, people become new creatures, driving motivators can be rectified and transformed through the new birth in him, and a lifestyle of wisdom guided by the indwelled Spirit can be wrought from the inside out, “like sunlight at dawn that keeps getting brighter until broad daylight.” (Proverbs 4:18)

Young leaders have an option to look to Christ, rather than the world, to meet their needs. It is essential to establish a disciplined lifestyle motivated by what God declares to be important, not by what the world says is important.

Past Life: Awareness of the Divine Presence

Human beings are complex and diverse, with many underlying factors that drive their lives and existence. These can include habits and personality traits,

³³ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 127.

³⁴ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 128. “No other options, Fear, Love and Gratitude, Rewards, Our Identity in Christ, Purpose and Hope, Longing for God.”

emotions and psychological factors, and values and subtle worldview, to name a few. These factors foster the display of the spiritual needs mentioned in this thesis-project which young leaders need to reflect upon. The first step of spiritual life development is an awareness and understanding of these unspoken, but noticeable, life dynamics.

If self-awareness is thought of as a circle, what is within the circle is the current level of awarding self, and this allows one to perceive oneself. As the circle expands, not only is there a higher portion of conscious awareness of oneself, but also the borders of awareness have expanded upon a wider field of discovery. If ever there is a shift of understanding toward the central point of the circle, a new awareness of the “awarding self” will appear, and there will be a paradigm shift in life.

Loder has mentioned five arenas to collect role confusion in reassembling the identity exploration of young leaders, and among them is the understanding of space and time. Concerning space, it involves either the subjective pursuit of identity as individual behavioral expressions to stake one’s territories, or the objective conforming to societal expectations of behavior. Theologically, “the transformation of space occurs when one realizes existentially that Jesus is the promised land.”³⁵ Concerning time, Loder highlights two distinct views of time. One views eternity as entering chronological time from somewhere beyond. The other is that “all time is gathered into a single comprehensive vision of one’s place in Creation. It is the fullness of time in a comprehensive present that takes up and transfigures all that went before and

³⁵ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 210. “But the transformation of space occurs when one realizes existentially that Jesus is the promised land. . . . In him the promised land is transformed to the kingdom of God, the reign of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”

what is yet to come.”³⁶ Thus, theologically speaking, “time is kairos as of waiting the fullness of time.”³⁷ It is not just a balance of subjective and objective views of time, but the rhythm of the human spirit toward the culminating moment of something more significant the Spirit of God is doing or will do.

Kevin Gushiken, in his understanding of Loder's theological-psychological approach, spiritual transformation is when “a person comes to understand God’s view of [space and] time.” This involves recognizing the trail of God’s handiwork in the past, “adhering to the expectations of the Spirit today,” “waiting in expectation for what the Spirit might do in the future.”³⁸ In other words, it creates a transcendent unity between the person and God. Gushiken continues to explain biblically, “The scheduling of moments for reflective space, times where the adolescent can think and ponder on the biblical text or its application, can begin to nurture spiritual formation by unraveling the noise and distraction that hinders identity exploration.”³⁹

³⁶ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 232-233.

³⁷ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 212. “Theological time is kairos, the fullness of time. A balanced view of time may be a prerequisite for fully understanding kairos; that is, the balance preserves the psyche from subjective absorption and form objective defensive rigidity. But theologically, kairos, as the fullness of time, is normative; balanced views of time are in expectation of or waiting on the fullness of time. . . . Here subjective and objective time come together in a way that not only transcends the balanced ego but puts the ego back into the world with a heightened expectation of what the Spirit of God may do next.”

³⁸ Kevin M. Gushiken, “Nurturing Spiritual Identity Formation in Youth Curriculum from the Theological-Psychological Approach of James Loder,” *Christian Education Journal* series 3, vol. 7, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 324. “The two spectrums are defined along subjective and objective categories. With respect to space, the subjective involves an adolescent’s pursuit for identity by expressing himself in extreme behavior or staking out his own space through peer groups. In terms of time, it is characterized by an open-ended approach to responsibility and a wandering demeanor towards life. In contrast, the objective conforms to societal expectations of behavior as it relates to space, and a more a focused, goal-oriented perspective with regard to time. For Loder, the bodily aspect is transformed when a person comes to understand God’s view of time. This involves waiting in expectation for what the Spirit might do in the future while adhering to the expectations of the Spirit today, and therefore creating a transcendent unity between the subjective and objective.”

³⁹ Gushiken, “Nurturing Spiritual Identity,” 328.

A spiritual understanding and awareness are unlike a developmental psychology, which is self-focused. Scripture exhorts us to look to Christ, not to self, and it is together with Christ that our true being can be reflected and differentiated. Boa comes to define the biblical view of self-love in this way: “Loving ourselves correctly means seeing ourselves as God see us.”⁴⁰ That is how Joseph came to interpret his life differently, from “one who is sold to Egypt by his brother,” to “God sent me before you to preserve life.” (Genesis 45:4-5) According to Loder, introspection is a necessary component to discovering the “face of God” as who God is, and ultimately the true identity achievement of who I am in life.

The Future Outlook: Anchor One’s Core Identity in Christ

Young leaders are going through the developmental process of identity formation. This is the development of an individual’s distinct personality, in which individual characteristics are possessed, and by which a person is recognized or known. Identity is often described in a psychosocial structure as finite, consisting of separate and distinct parts, such as family, cultural, personal, and professional. Yet, according to Parker Palmer, it is an ever-evolving core where all the forces that constitute life converge in the mystery of self: “my genetic makeup, the nature of the man and woman who gave me life, the culture in which I was raised, people who have sustained me and people who have done me harm, the good and ill I have done to others, and to myself, the experience of love and suffering — and much, much more.”⁴¹

⁴⁰ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 35.

⁴¹ Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 13.

The grace of God shows us that the most important things are not what we do or what we have experienced but who and whose we are in Christ. The New Testament states that we became a new creation when we entrusted ourselves to Christ. In him, we have been granted great dignity, security, forgiveness, unconditional love and acceptance, hope, purpose, righteousness, wholeness, and peace with God. This is the core identity young leaders need to stand upon for their lives to unfold in Christ.

Young leaders may not have sufficient accumulated wisdom to understand that this is how things are. Boa reminds us of Augustine's tradition of "faith seeking understanding," that Scripture does not command people to feel the truth but to believe it: "Mak[ing] the faith decision to regard its proclamations as true, we are inviting the Holy Spirit to make these truths more real, not only in our thinking but gradually in our feelings as well."⁴² The internalization process requires the discipline of mental renewal throughout one's lifetime, equipping through reflective teaching, and fellowship with like-minded people along the spiritual journey.

It is a lifetime struggle to wrestle with the issue of identity in Christ. However, without giving attention to guide their internalized worldviews and values in Christ, young leaders will base their decisions on activities, the objective will become an end in itself, and eventually so will life. Boa highlights the differences of a true passion of life as described in the Scripture: "Doing (our actions) should flow out of being (our identity); the better we grasp our identity in Christ, the more our actions should reflect Christlike character."⁴³

⁴² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 145.

⁴³ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 36.

Past, Present, and Future in Christ

Life deals with what happens in time: the past, present, and future. It deals with a world where things rarely turn out the way people think they ought to. Scorgie realizes, “As sinners, we tend to be out of touch with our true selves, as it is too painful and terrifying, to be honest about what we have actually done, we then pretend and denial.”⁴⁴ In the mess of the history of life, young leaders need to find themselves. Eugene Peterson writes, “Jesus found himself, and the remarkable thing is that he embraced it.”⁴⁵

Peterson reflects upon the times one can have in Christ, writing, “God is at work in our history; he heals and helps; he forgives and blesses; he takes a creation in ruins because of human willfulness and patiently begins to make a new creation of it; he takes a world corrupted by evil and begins the long, slow work of transforming it into a holy place.”⁴⁶ When one sees time only in bits and pieces, moments and fragments, it will be taken, as Peterson names it, “sin-defined.” Peterson shows the stories of wonder in Exodus, and the ways the Gospel of Mark defined the death of Jesus as sacrificial and resurrectional, drawing readers into understanding and participation that the collection of times as history are actually “salvation-defined.”⁴⁷

With the recognition that life is messy, one can recognize that the spiritual life development of young leaders is also messy. God’s method of addressing this messiness is his participation in people’s history. God is a God who saves in history.

⁴⁴ Scorgie, *Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 73-86.

⁴⁵ Eugene H. Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 137.

⁴⁶ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 169.

⁴⁷ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 178.

Through the exodus and the death of Jesus, Peterson shows that God will and has made human history different, and so will be the history of young leaders.

Relational Community for Wholistic Spirituality

Hindrances to Wholistic Spirituality (Problem Ecclesiology)

Many Generation-Xers have become leaders of the church, and they tend to organize their churches the same way they organize other areas of their lives. For many, a community comes in the form of religious clubs or corporations. Clubs associate individuals voluntarily for specific purposes, and when an individual's interest lands outside these purposes, the social bonding is weak. Hiebert describes the effect: "The autonomous person became a self-centered person who measures all things in term of their benefits and costs to him. The consequence of this freedom and autonomy is a lack of permanent human relations and security."⁴⁸ A person does not necessarily expect to share convictions and critical moments in time with others, as he may not and will not sacrifice his interest for the interests of the group.

Corporations are factories structured to maximize delivery and return. Stewardship is based on control management, relationships are purpose-driven based on contracts, identities are defined as part of the specialized body in the mechanical order, and faithful servanthood is the offer of services in exchange for reward in one's appraisals. Hiebert describes the effect: "People [who] join are expecting to offer some services in exchange for some rewards. If they feel they are not receiving what they are worth, they are free to leave, and the same for management to dismiss those it feels

⁴⁸ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 172.

do not fit the company's needs."⁴⁹ Each person becomes faceless, and personal matters and life stories are excluded because they can disturb functional interactions.

Now, the modern evangelical movement assumes the gospel is addressed to individuals, and conversion is based on the individual cognitive affirmation that Jesus Christ is Lord. Accordingly, the church will either continue with another religious proclamation or sustain an operating engagement with current participants. The foreseeable danger is, as Gordon Smith mentions, "If one can be 'saved' without reference to the community, then one can presumably live the rest of one's Christian life without reference to the community."⁵⁰ Hiebert points out another deadly consequence for Christianity, saying, "Individualism has led to a weak understanding of the church as a family of families of faith."⁵¹ Salvation has become a personal matter between the self and God, and there is little emphasis on the formation of a community in Christ, the faith of the family is disconnected, and the families of faith are diminishing.

Youth ministry is not just a functional or operational connection between young leaders and youth ministry. The purpose of youth ministry is not for maintaining continuous attractions for youth, and the capabilities of young leaders are not for the delivery of bluffing activities in youth ministry. Youth ministry should be about the lives of young leaders; the lives of young leaders are the ministry. It is all about Christ

⁴⁹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 172.

⁵⁰ Gordon T. Smith, *Transforming Conversion: Rethinking the Language and Contours of Christian Initiation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2010), 9.

⁵¹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 173.

with us, the flow of his life in and through the people involved, and the community that facilitates the dynamics of “using life to influence another life.”⁵²

Consideration of Wholistic Spirituality for Transitional Youth

Coming from the world of competitiveness, where there is a lack of trust and care, young leaders are dying for authentic communities where they can share their lives and visions, find support and mutual encouragement, and carry the call for greater peace and justice. Coming from families of brokenness where there is a lack of warmth and security, young leaders are in desperate need of nurturing communities where they can embrace the wisdom that supplies depth to life, and reside in the guidance that gives structure for life.

Jean Vanier, the founder of L'Arche, an international federation of communities for people with developmental disabilities, highlights that communities must be led with wisdom. “Young people must be led to a true community where they can become men and women of prayer and compassion, open to others and the world, particularly to the poor, the oppressed, the lost and the vulnerable, and thus become artisans of peace.”⁵³ A community needs to have intended purposes and practices to guide life. In this thesis-project, the intentional purpose is focused on the personal and spiritual life development of transitioning young leaders in response to their spiritual needs.

Loder incorporates an approach from a psychological perspective that emerges from Erikson. It provides a substantive theoretical base to incorporate

⁵² Philemon Choi, *Using Life to Influence Another Life* (Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2001). The slogan “Make use of a life to influence another life” is frequently referred in Hong Kong since the publication of this book, particularly in the educational and social services sectors.

⁵³ Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1989), 5.

identity development and spiritual life formation. Loder suggests five arenas specifically related to the transitional situation of young leaders: bodily (about space and time), ideologies (about values), love (about intimacy), authority (about roles), and work (about worth).⁵⁴

These five areas provide the necessary dynamics for an integrated spiritual formation with developmental growth in response to the spiritual needs and spiritual life development deficiencies of young leaders. This spiritual formation Loder discusses is not achieved instantaneously but rather through various teachable moments throughout the formation process, by wrestling over issues of values, intimacy, roles, and worth, as well as evaluating family teachings, personal disappointments, and difficult times in life. This process is necessary, and it continues until eventually one arrives at a place of contentment regarding one's call in life.

A community becomes a place where these teachable moments related to the five arenas about values, intimacy, roles, and worth can be reflected upon.⁵⁵ On the one hand, the quest for the community of faith to pastor young leaders is to remain rooted in the soil of faith and identity in Christ, and on the other hand, it is to receive life and facilitate spiritual life development from within the community.

Relate Authentically — Values

Young leaders are in the process of forming a belief structure and value system that is trustworthy. They tend to move away from family and traditional values as they

⁵⁴ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 208-13. "The bodily axis, ideological axis, authority axis, love axis and work axis."

⁵⁵ Note that the "bodily arena of space and time" among one of the five arenas is being discussed in "Past Life Experience" under "Spiritual Life Development for the Fragmented Life" in this chapter.

develop a worldview of their own, characterized by questioning beliefs and values, listening to the experiences of others, and trying to apply the worldview creatively. However, when young leaders are nurtured under an environment of functionalism and moralism, their values will be based on knowledge, competency, and self-sufficiency. With excellence being defined by performance and benchmarking, the spiritual formation of young leaders fails to realize how wonderful trusting others and creative improvising could be.

Bill Thrall's ministry focus is to help leaders establish trust in their relationships and nurture grace-based environments. The way Thrall sees the environment of grace is that "people get the opportunity to be loved in real time by others who actually treat him or her accurately, . . . as this community no longer measures righteousness by how much I process or how little sins I have committed, but by how well we experience love through the authentic sharing."⁵⁶ Such a community allows young leaders to be embraced in a culture of authentic interaction to let their underlying doubts, disbeliefs, unsettled regrets, and self-indulgence to surface. As Thrall explains, "This environment of grace relaxes them from the unnecessary protect[ive] mechanism and false identity, spontaneously, this environment contains relationships in which people are invited to get access to each other, to talk about each other's weaknesses, flaws, and sins."⁵⁷

The community of spiritual life development should encourage authentic sharing of opinions and mapping of values, whereby each young leader can share about different influences in their lives and the specific values or beliefs that may

⁵⁶ Bill Thrall and Bruce McNicol, "Communities of Grace," in *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation*, ed. Alan Andrews (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 79.

⁵⁷ Thrall and McNicol, "Communities of Grace," 79.

prove helpful to them. As Gushiken interprets Loder's axis of values, "By helping young leaders to identify the value messages, it becomes easier for them to apply biblical theology, encouraging a belief system that is theologically sound yet individual to the person."⁵⁸ It is only through the rediscovery of the reality of God that young leaders will be able to locate an integrated Christian faith of their own.

Reconcile Separation — Intimacy

Young leaders long for love and intimacy, and the absence of an intimate and loving relationship produces loneliness; however, interpersonal relationships among youth can be messy and chaotic. While they look for intimacy and affirmation from others, they also seek dominance and control over them. Among these mixtures, there are also unconscious psychological projections and transferences, such as the influences of unhelped hurts and wounds they may have received during their developmental process. Many broken interpersonal relationships and blockages to intimacy are a result of these unresolved life issues.

The community of grace begins to demonstrate how love can handle sin, how people begin to transform as they learn to repent or forgive in the realm of grace, and how reconciliation can be experienced with one another and with the Lord. This kind of authentic spiritual formation takes place when one finds genuine intimacy available in the Spirit that never abandons or confuses. This is what Thrall describes as the fundamental necessity: "Grace is expressed as unending, unearned, and unwavering, which is the inexhaustible love of God, an absolute acceptance of us."⁵⁹ This means

⁵⁸ Gushiken, "Nurturing Spiritual Identity," 328-29.

⁵⁹ Thrall and McNicol, "Communities of Grace," 66.

that we are secure in the Lord's unconditional love, just as Philip Yancey describes: "Nothing we do can cause God to love us more, and nothing we do can cause God to love us less."⁶⁰ Such gracious love secures our trust and contentment in the Lord.

Jurgen Moltmann sees this unreserved intimacy with amazement: "Every lived moment can be lived in the inconceivable closeness of God in the spirit: Interior intimo meo, said Augustine — God is closer to me than I am to myself."⁶¹ Such intimate closeness not only heals and secures but also frees people to be who they truly are personally and interpersonally. "Seeing ourselves as God sees us"⁶² means the right intimate relationship with God results in the right intimate relationship with self and with others. To accomplish identity formation, young leaders need to be directed toward the omnipresence of God in every aspect of their life, particularly the areas of emotional rest and soulful contentment.

Reposition Concern — Roles

During their transition from youth to young adulthood, young leaders have different manners of response in finding their roles, what Loder describes as authority frames. On one end of the spectrum is a high view of authority, resulting in leadership traits and control. On the other end is a desire for independence, seeking to live in such a way that life remains self-expressing in its own terms. For those inclined toward leadership, there is a "human propensity to want to make others over in our

⁶⁰ Philip Yancey, *What's So Amazing About Grace?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 71.

⁶¹ Jurgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 35.

⁶² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 35. "Loving God completely is the key to loving self correctly, as it starts to seeing ourselves as God sees us, and this in turn is the key to loving others compassionately."

image.”⁶³ Conversely, individuals who are followers “tend to be susceptible to being made in the image of others.”⁶⁴

As young leaders begin to explore their identity, it is essential to guide them to evaluate and understand their disposition on the spectrum of being a leader or a follower, which is also a means for them to discover their calling in life. Gushiken sees this as a moment of spiritual formation which “aims for a transformed life where a person is able to assume the role of leader or follower without it influencing their self-esteem positively or negatively.”⁶⁵ Paul reminds one “not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.” (Romans 12:3) The key for the young leader is to embrace and remain flexible, without becoming prideful regarding authority or self-loathing as relates to independence.

For one end of the spectrum as leaders, Boa believes “as we grow in our understanding of God’s unconditional love and acceptance of us in Christ, we are increasingly liberated from using people to meet our needs.”⁶⁶ Not only does this understanding release leaders from misinterpreting relationships with themselves and others, but also it empowers them, as Boa continues to explain: “When we understand that Christ’s resources are our resources, we can become secure enough to serve

⁶³ Karen Marie Yust and E. Byron Anderson, *Taught by God: Teaching and Spiritual Formation* (Atlanta, GA: Chalice Press, 2006), 36.

⁶⁴ Gushiken, “Nurturing Spiritual Identity,” 329.

⁶⁵ Gushiken, “Nurturing Spiritual Identity,” 324.

⁶⁶ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 42.

other people without expecting reciprocity.”⁶⁷ Loving Christ more than people increases our capacity to love, serve, forgive, and give ourselves away to people.

For the other end, as followers, Boa speaks about the effect when people are under the fullness of grace: “The more we love him [Christ], the greater our willingness to trust and obey him in the things he calls us to do.”⁶⁸ “The more we are impressed by him, the less we will be impressed by people, power, and things.”⁶⁹ It is precisely how spiritual formation should be aligned for followers: not what they need to do but what their lives should embrace, such that their performance tendency at the call of authority can be dissolved. The more followers are concerned with what God thinks of them, the less they will be worried about what others think of them, and eventually, they will be free from the enslavement to other opinions of who they are.

In the kingdom, there is no difference between leader or follower, or between the concern of making others in our image or making our image in the image of others. Instead, Christ is the center of all things, and spiritual formation provides a process to motivate young leaders to engage in the process of becoming more like Christ, which shapes their focus to become other-oriented, instead of self-serving, and transforming them into servant leaders.

Rediscover Humanness — Worth

Who am I, and what is my worth? On one end of the spectrum, it is self-worth attached to achievement. For young leaders, it is mostly about obtaining grades,

⁶⁷ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 42.

⁶⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 31.

⁶⁹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 32.

pursuing future success, and enjoying a positive standing in the community or society. On the opposite end, it is emptiness toward one's self resulting in an indifferent attitude toward life. There is a natural desire in young leaders to attach worth to achievement, be it academic, social, or athletic. This is encouraged by parents, teachers, peers, and even youth workers, by affirming individuals when they perform well. Inevitably, this conditions young leaders to associate self-worth with performance. When performance is low, there emerges a sense of emptiness or self-despair, feeling as if one has no personal value.

Loder further describes the phenomenon: "The achievement-oriented child is socialized into an achieving society in which he learns not a sense of industry balanced by recognized and acceptable limits, but a 'hypercathected'⁷⁰ work principle in which he flees from the fear of inferiority through accumulating achievements and finds life dull if there is no competition."⁷¹ This inferiority cultivates feelings of wanting to be worthy and lovable, and it eventually provokes an overdetermined need to achieve. In the end, it forms an addiction cycle, and the identity is endlessly trapped. Life is filled with disappointment, and one can never achieve whatever one wants to achieve, not to mention that what may be achieved is only temporal and subjective. The achievement addiction cycle inevitably leads to an endless pursuit of worth that is never obtainable.

Spiritual formation is fundamental to settle one's identity in redemption, finding one's worth as a child of God, dependent upon the cross rather than achievements. Thrall and McNicol respond to such achievement addiction: "By

⁷⁰ The medical definition of hypercathexis is excessive concentration of desire upon a particular object.

⁷¹ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 182.

maturing toward ‘who I am becoming,’ it contributes to defining the way ‘I should live.’”⁷² They continue to explain it is by way of the communities of grace that one finds “the process of experiencing grace with God, as well as others who contribute to validate ‘who I am.’”

God, together with those followers of Christ, form a relational community of grace in defining who they are and who they should be becoming. “It helps us to discover and define who we are and how we shall live in trust, love, grace, humility, dignity, and justice.”⁷³ As image-bearers of a relational God, people are designed for relationships, and their worthiness is not grounded in achievement or success but in the authentic relationships for which they are initially designed. As Scorgie and Kevin Reimer realize, “doing so is crucial to our deliverance from painful alienation, loneliness, relational wounds, and dysfunctions. Through increased conformity to the relational nature of God, we find our own broken humanity progressively restored.”⁷⁴ When people enter most fully into the experience for which they are originally designed, they become more fully human, and ultimately their worth is found as being fully human.

Relational Community for the Disconnected Life

Relational Community of Grace

What is the response to the spiritual formation needs of the above mentioned transitional needs of young leaders? Instructional practices, such as Bible study, catechism, teaching, and preaching, all have positive influences. However, persons are

⁷² Thrall and McNicol, “Communities of Grace,” 61.

⁷³ Thrall and McNicol, “Communities of Grace,” 61.

⁷⁴ Glen G. Scorgie and Kevin S. Reimer, “Spirituality in Community,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 77-78.

formed even more significantly by the life practices of influential others, and they are profoundly shaped by the collective ethos of their environment. Such a relational community of grace as described by Thrall and Bruce “is a product of those who experience and live out the principles of the Word of Life, and the invitation for others to experience and live out these principles.”⁷⁵

A healthy spiritual formation community is necessary for security, trust, integrity, freedom, creativity, maturity, joy, and even physical safety. It provides the platform to proclaim the possible discovery of grace. In other words, the community drives spiritual formation to be attracted to the grace of God. Healthy spiritual formation happens in such a communal context, where reconciliation with self, reconnection with others, and regeneration of spiritual life begin.

Nouwen mentions three movements of the spiritual life, and among the first is “from Hostility to Hospitality.” According to Nouwen, this is the most far-reaching to the innermost self, and it is the key area where spiritual formation begins. One of the doorways to this key area is the benefit of an “authentic community.” It is an intimate relationship between people that asks for not only mutual openness but also mutual respect and protection of each other’s uniqueness. Nouwen describes it as a mystery: “It protects and respects the aloneness of the other, and creates the free space where he can convert his loneliness into a solitude that can be shared.” The most important transformational effect, as Nouwen explains, is that “it encourages each other to enter

⁷⁵ Thrall and McNicol, “Communities of Grace,” 61.

into the silence of the innermost being and discover there the voice that calls us beyond the limits of human togetherness to a new communion.”⁷⁶

Authentic Community of Spiritual Formation

When people are connected to authentic people who share the journey with them in an authentic community, particularly with those who have progressed further down the road than the others, Bruce Demarest describes this as “soul caring.”⁷⁷ Boa gives details on four spectrums of such soul-care ministry⁷⁸ which are applicable to the needs of young leaders in their current stages of spiritual life development:

- ✓ Soul Mate: The most natural and spontaneous form of personal soul care involves the giving and taking of unstructured continuous interaction between friends who walk together in peace and trust. This is unlike the kind of spiritual growth and healing experienced in a purposeful group or relationship with a wise elder; instead, it is through the cultivation of more in-depth relationships with people God has placed in our lives.
- ✓ Wisdom Guidance: There are sensitive and wise people who can serve others as spiritual guides, to provide help and healing through words of encouragement, exhortation, and advice. This guidance can take place through correspondence, recommended reading, sharing of journals, and offering spiritual counsel as necessary.

⁷⁶ Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life* (New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1975), 44.

⁷⁷ Bruce Demarest, *Satisfy Your Soul* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1999).

⁷⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 438-39. The four roles of soul care counseling are Spiritual Friendship, Spiritual Guidance, Spiritual Mentoring, and Spiritual Direction.

- ✓ **Discipling Mentor:** This is a more formal and structured dimension of soul care by people who use their spiritual knowledge and experience to equip others. Many times it is discipleship which exposes, equips, encourages, and exhorts others in their walk with Christ. And the mentoring relationship is more effective when there are clear purposes, regularity, accountability, open communication, confidentiality, a definite life cycle, periodic evaluation, revision of expectations, and closure.
- ✓ **Spiritual Director:** The purpose is to help people to discern the workings of grace in their lives and offer them guidance and assistance as they seek to progress in prayer and obedience. Spiritual directors must possess wisdom, depth, skill, and prayer, as well as be marked by a combination of knowledge, discernment, and character. Their relationship with those who seek their ministry is not authoritarian or that of a professional service but as companions on the spiritual journey who enhance inner desires and clarify the movement of the Spirit. They are physicians of the soul through cleansing, discernment, clarification, alignment, and implementation.

Sociologist Charles Murray provides insightful research and analysis on how the United States has been falling apart over the past fifty years. Besides the political, racial, and economic causes, Murray has identified four domains essential for life satisfaction: family, community, vocation, and faith. He writes, “The nation has shown signs of coming apart in all four domains.”⁷⁹ Philemon Choi, the former chairman of Hong Kong Commission on Youth, in his recent response to Hong Kong

⁷⁹ Charles Murray, *Coming Apart: The States of White America, 1960-2010* (Danvers, MA: Crown Forum, 2012).

youth ministry and government policy, refers to Murray's findings and stresses the importance of soulful reconnection: "Soul-Caring and Mentoring can contribute significantly to the restoration of the younger generation's dissatisfaction in all of these four domains."⁸⁰

This is also the reason why Loder introduces one more critical piece to the nurturing of the transformed life during the adolescent stage of identities and role confusion, Erikson's concept of "adult guarantor." According to Loder, this person is usually "close enough to the adolescent's age to participate in his world, but at the same time guarantees that authentic adulthood is possible."⁸¹ Two qualities are critical to this role. First, this person must be genuinely interested in the person, assisting his movement toward authenticity. Second, it is vital that the adult guarantor exhibits the qualities of Jesus Christ.

Rick Warren suggests there are three phases of mentoring in the case of Paul and Timothy: "Parenthood, pacesetting, and partnering."⁸² As in Paul's letters to Timothy, where he calls him "my true child in the faith," parenthood is a sense of developmental guidance, much as what people call developmental psychology nowadays. (1 Timothy 1:2) Pacesetting is the demonstration of ways in ministry, as Paul mentions: "You have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings." (2 Timothy 3:10-11) Partnering is the final process of being a son to a student, and ultimately, "my fellow worker." (Romans

⁸⁰ Philemon Choi Yuen-wan, "Mentoring and Youth Development," *The Published Articles of Youth Global Network Youth Ministry Training* (Autumn 2016), 8.

⁸¹ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 228.

⁸² Rick Warren, "Three Phases of a Paul and Timothy Relationship (February 6, 2014)," Pastor.com Community, accessed December 22, 2016, <http://pastors.com/paul-timothy/#>.

16:21) This kind of mentoring Warren mentions is “the only way for discipleship to take on the multi-generational nature,”⁸³ just as it is described in Scripture: “What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

Adult guarantor, soul care facilitator, and life coach mentor are not just other forms of coaching or counseling; each has an essential role in passing on the heritage of walking the walk of faith. “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.” (1 Corinthians 11:1) Paul called his readers to follow his example as he followed Christ. This is not referring to following people who provide a perfect example; instead, it is about following those who are intentionally following Jesus, those who are intentionally looking for Christ as their life teacher to imitate. “Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.” (1 Timothy 4:16) People come to faith as individuals, but they grow in community. The power of an exemplary life is probably the most important teaching, as well as the ways of spiritual formation of Jesus, Paul, and other witnesses of the New Testament.

Vocational Pathfinding for Missional Discipleship

Hindrances to Missional Discipleship (Problem Eschatology)

Jeanine Brown offers a streamlined definition of the core aspects of New Testament spirituality: “It is a life lived in intimate relationship with Christ, a life

⁸³ Warren, “Three Phases of a Paul and Timothy Relationship.”

defined by ‘salvation and self-giving.’”⁸⁴ Salvation is a continuation of life transformation unto the fullness in Christ, and self-giving continues to expand into the various missional callings for disciples.

However, Meyer observed that there are at least three reduced discipleship forms in respect to the “reduced gospel” at work, which cuts down the transformational and missional dynamics to nothing:⁸⁵ “A gospel offers forgiveness of sins and future life in heaven with little expectation for change in the present, a gospel seeks change in societal structures but not change in individuals’ lives, and a gospel offers religious goods and services in exchange for financial support and attendance, but little change is offer for life now.” These “reduced gospels” put people in a contract for a status in pursuit of success and in consumption for membership.

Many youth ministries try to fill the gaps and make adjustments. Some youth programs aim to engage youth participation with creative activities and various roles for participation, but the busyness and temporal nature simply make life more aimless and reduced. Some youth programs aim to develop discipleship practices, but they often fall short of visions and means for deep character building and kingdom life. Even with discipleship series being purpose-driven and intentional, if these series merely incorporate more practices or activities, the prescriptions will only create more driven people or more performing young leaders.

Wright reminds us of the basics: “What we are ‘here for’ is to become genuine human beings, reflecting the God in whose image we are made, and doing so in

⁸⁴ Jeanine K. Brown, “New Testament Foundations of Christian Spirituality,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 47.

⁸⁵ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 32.

worship on the one hand and in mission, in its full and large sense, on the other; and that we do this not least by ‘following Jesus.’”⁸⁶ Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you; Jesus says the kingdom does involve us, but it is not primarily about us. (See Matthew 6:33) As Warren writes, “It is not about you.”⁸⁷ A person’s vocation, according to his created design, is to serve a purpose bigger than his sustainment or satisfaction. Scorgie says, “We find real significance only as we are able to align ourselves with a goal greater than our own personal comfort and security.”⁸⁸

Spiritual Formational Themes in the New Testament

For the spiritual life of a missional disciple to go deep, one needs to study how spiritual formation is shaped by New Testament witnesses. The work of Richard Hays describes three motifs: the cross, the new community (in Christ), and the new creation (eschatology).⁸⁹ These three motifs are a continuous inward spiritual journey, moving the life of the disciple toward the image of God, and an outward spiritual journey, transforming a self-focused person to one who is other-focused and God-focused. These motifs are responses to the “self-focused survivor” orientation (see chapter 1), as mentioned in the overall spiritual needs of young leaders. Also, they correspond to

⁸⁶ Wright, *After You Believe*, 26.

⁸⁷ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 17.

⁸⁸ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 105-20.

⁸⁹ Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1996), 19. “Three recurrent, interlocking theological motifs provide the framework for Paul’s ethical teaching: eschatology [new creation], the cross, and the new community in Christ.”

the three dynamics discussed: transformational, relational, and vocational, providing a biblical perspective for each one of them.

The Cross (Transformational)

Jesus' response to Peter at Caesarea Philippi disclosed for the first time that the call to discipleship is also necessarily a call to take up the cross. Jesus reshaped his disciples' understanding of his mission, and the focus of their call to discipleship is suffering. These themes are reiterated in the Gospel of Mark. (See Mark 8:27-10:45) "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:43-45) Those who are called into the discipleship of Jesus are to be servants, and the pattern for this servanthood is definitively shown by Jesus, who came to give up his own life for the sake of others. The teaching about discipleship has now been set forth with clarity: to be a follower of Jesus is to share his vocation of "suffering servanthood."⁹⁰

An earlier section in this chapter, Consideration of Identity Exploration in Christ, highlights that young leaders need to deny the pervasive structure of false identity; the false self of life according to the flesh needs to be abandoned. Robert Mulholland describes the way out from such a pervasive structure: "Attachment to God in love is the only sure way to be detached from those things that have formed our false identities and held us in bondage to our self-referenced way of being."⁹¹ The

⁹⁰ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 82.

⁹¹ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., "Spirituality and Transformation," in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 219-20.

transformation to being what Hays calls “The Cross” is an ongoing process, a series of deaths, as described by Boa: “Death to experiencing life on our own terms, death to our quest for comfort and happiness, death to our own dreams, and death to autonomy and independence. Death is the only way to resurrection, and none of these deaths is bigger than God.”⁹²

The obedience of Jesus is interpreted as servanthood, and the ultimate norm for Christian discipleship is defined by what Jesus accomplished all the way to the cross. (Mark 10:45) “Anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” (Mark 8:34) The obedience of the disciple is an inward spiritual journey of emptying oneself, putting aside what is most dear to him, yet gaining the satisfaction of the One who is most to be treasured. Servanthood is an outward spiritual journey of walking and seeing God; servanthood happens when people have put aside their agenda and look for that of God.

The New Community (Relational)

Conversion to Christ and the cross should lead to conversion to the community. Boa reflects on such a “True Community in Christ” as not created by human attempts; instead, “It is a by-product of others-centeredness, and this, in turn, is a by-product of finding our lives by losing them for the sake of Jesus.”⁹³

Hays, when describing the redeemed community, identifies two components of a Christian community: They “share a common life in Christ” and “manifest common

⁹² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 424.

⁹³ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 424. See Matthew 16:25.

goodness of God.”⁹⁴ On the one hand, Paul displays the principle that love has its primary locus in the common life of the church, and the diversity of God’s gifts is necessary for the common good of the community as he explores the analogy of the human body in which all the parts are necessary to be healthy functioning of the organism. (see 1 Corinthians 13; 1 Corinthians 12) On the other hand, Paul asserts that the community is where God dwells, and God is at work through the Spirit to create communities that prefigure and embody reconciliation and the healing of the world. (see Galatians 3:16; Romans 15:7-13)

Being able to “share a common life in Christ” is an inward spiritual journey for one awakened from being self-focused, and then being able to widen the perspective of goodness from the other-focused and God-focused points of view. Being able to “manifest common goodness of God” is an outward spiritual journey, not just a reflection of kind caring, but also being able to care for others, showing compassion for the needy, and being a voice for the voiceless. Spiritual formation is crucial within the new community in Christ, as Boa describes: community is “a meaningful context of encouragement, accountability, and worship [manifesting the central common focus being God and Christ] is essential to spiritual maturity, since this involves the others-centered use of spiritual gifts for mutual edification.”⁹⁵

The New Creation (Vocational)

In the light of the Christ-event, the church is to find its identity within the cosmic drama of God’s reconciliation of the world to himself. Paul describes it using

⁹⁴ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 32-36.

⁹⁵ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 23.

the phrase “new creation,” proclaiming that the church has already entered the eschatological age. (see 2 Corinthians 5:17) The new creation has come since the day of salvation, but the “eschatological already . . . but not yet” reality has put the disciples of Christ in the tensions of hope and reality, and glory and suffering. Hays describes the spiritual journey the Christian disciples go through: “Those who have experienced the freedom and power of God’s spirit continue to hope for a reality that they do not yet see, sharpened by the tension between hope and reality, the disciples wait and groan and rejoice.”⁹⁶

Purpose and hope are essential motivators God has declared in Scripture. Hope is related to purpose, and these biblical motivators move disciples toward a long-term gain. However, many have a misplaced or an ill-defined hope. As Boa describes it, “Most people fail to wrestle with the issue of purpose without reasoned purposes to guide them; instead, they base their decisions on activities and objective that have become ends in themselves.”⁹⁷ Nowadays, it is common that many Christians put their hope in Christ for their eternal destiny, while they place their hope in the world for everything else. When this happens, the pursuit of security, significance, and satisfaction takes precedence over the pursuit of Christ. This is important to grasp in the spiritual formation of young leaders. To nurture hope during the spiritual formation of young leaders, one needs to work on the purpose of life as well.

The inheritance of the new creation and foretaste of all the goodness of God’s righteousness are part of an ongoing inward spiritual journey, filling the human spirit with hope and contentment, even in things not yet seen. The missional identity of

⁹⁶ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 19-20.

⁹⁷ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 146.

reconciling the world to God's new creation and all his goodness is a purposeful outward spiritual journey, though the loving kindness of reconciliation and the commitment to righteousness are also accompanied by the tension of persecution and suffering.

Consideration of Discipleship in the Gospel of Matthew

Characteristics in the Gospel of Matthew

The ending of Matthew's Gospel explicitly draws together the threads of the story and the commissioning of the disciplines: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20) The Gospel of Matthew is among the New Testament witnesses with a clear objective to prepare missional disciples for God's kingdom.

Stephen Lee, the pastor of Saddleback Church Hong Kong, highlights that nowadays youth are looking for "relational, relevant, relax[ed], and real."⁹⁸ They want congruency of spiritual life and real life, walking the walk one is convicted of, rather than being simply a keeper of doctrines and traditions. The emerging generation seeks a radical call of conversion, a journey that can move into God's reign of peace, justice, mercy, and renewal. However, many elders and pastors of traditional and evangelical

⁹⁸ Stephen Lee, "Challenges in Pastoring College Student and Young Working Adult," in Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Research Team, *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*, ed. David C. W. Wu and Eric T. H. Lau (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited, 2016), 139-46.

churches labelled these emerging youth at the back as “yellow ribbon,”⁹⁹ with an impression that they turn against the reformed tradition. Michael Crosby says of Matthew’s community in the Roman-Jewish context that they “experienced religious upheaval, conflicts of authority and interpretation of law, as well as cultural clashes within its imperial world.”¹⁰⁰ The reformed-emerging context is fairly comparable to the Jewish-Christian community in Matthew in many ways.

Hays writes, “Matthew is creating an ordered, symbolic world, [in the Gospel of Matthew] . . . [and] the way in which Matthew constructs that world may be seen in his representation of Jesus as teacher, his account of discipleship as community formation.”¹⁰¹ The construction of Matthew portrays Jesus as the spiritual teacher who supplants all other rabbis, expanding the Torah in a new and authoritative way with extensive blocks of teaching throughout the Gospel. (see Matthew 23:8; 5:1-7:27, 10:5-42; 13:1-52; 18:1-35; 23:1-25:46) The Gospel of Matthew describes a spiritual formation process. Hays also observes that the mission of Matthew aims “to create an inclusiveness that reached out to the Gentile,”¹⁰² and “Matthew was spectacularly successful in formulating a foundational narrative for Gentile mission.”¹⁰³ Matthew wrote from within a Jewish-Christian community, growing increasingly distant from other Jews, becoming increasingly Gentile in its membership and outlook, and

⁹⁹ John Sudworth, “Hong Kong protesters carry out ‘yellow ribbon’ march,” *BBC News*, Asia edition, November 9, 2014, accessed June 22, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-29975423>. “The yellow ribbon is used as a representation of demand for democracy in Hong Kong.”

¹⁰⁰ Michael H. Crosby, *Spirituality of the Beatitudes: Matthew’s Vision for the Church in an Unjust World* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 16.

¹⁰¹ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 94. “In his representation Jesus as teacher, his account of discipleship as community formation, and his adaptation of eschatology as a warrant for ethics.”

¹⁰² Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 107.

¹⁰³ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 107.

eventually becoming an assembly in which both Jew and Gentile would flourish together. The direction of formation of Matthew is transitional, bringing the Jewish-Gentile community into the new kingdom era.

Thus, the approaches of Matthew are in its transition of a unifying community ethos in Christ, intentional spiritual formation toward the image of Jesus, and missional focus for those who are serious in following the cross in an unjust world. It provides a relevant biblical reference in considering the spiritual life development journey of missional discipleship for young leaders.

Discipleship in the Gospel of Matthew

In response to the theme of the cross in the New Testament, instead of maintaining self-asserting and self-preserving behaviors (anger, lust, violence, hypocrisy, pride, materialism), disciples are to love their enemies, forgive freely, and trust God to provide for their material needs. Hays comments, “Matthew sees such teaching as instrumental to a deeper goal: the transformation of character and of the heart.”¹⁰⁴ Its vision has much in common with Israel’s wisdom tradition, though it is more concerned with the spiritual formation of Christ-like servant leaders than with the cultivation of wisdom and virtue. This is the spiritual formation Matthew has intended.

Regarding the new community, the counterintuitive paradoxes of the Beatitudes in Matthew alert readers to the fact that the new community is an alternative society, out of sync with the usual order of the world. The community lives in anticipation of the ultimate restoration by God, and as Hays observes, “To be trained [as a disciple]

¹⁰⁴ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 98.

for the kingdom is to be trained to see the world from the perspective of God's future — and therefore askew from what the world counts as common sense."¹⁰⁵ This is the change of ethos that Matthew's Jewish-Gentile Christian community is moving toward.

Regarding the new creation, Matthew chooses to spiritualize kingdom living by a hermeneutic of love and mercy. In the seven woes to the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus tells them they have missed "the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness." (Matthew 23:23) "Love God and love your neighbor as yourself" are not merely the greatest of all commandments; (Matthew 22:37-40) rather, in Matthew's Gospel, everything else in the Torah "hangs" upon them. Such a model of living that reflects the mercy of Christ is an alternative creation that is counter to the social culture. This is the missional focus Matthew has set for Christ's followers.

The Framework for Spiritual Formation in Matthew's Beatitudes

The Beatitudes not only provide an introduction to the Lord's Sermon on the Mount but also reflect the discipleship themes in Matthew: a character transformed to be a Christlike servant leader, an alternative community that anticipates the ethos of the kingdom, and a culture creating love and mercy. (See Matthew 5:3-10) More so, it embodies most clearly what it means for a missional disciple to love God and serve others in kingdom living. When comparing the Beatitudes in Luke's Gospel with Matthew's, one can probably see the version of Luke is more original, and

¹⁰⁵ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 98.

the one in Matthew is an expanded version in an account of spiritual formation.¹⁰⁶ (See Luke 6:20-26)

Each one of the Beatitudes implies the other, and as a whole, they come together, just as D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones has put it.¹⁰⁷ John Stott takes it further: the first four Beatitudes (verses 3-6) are grouped for an inward transformational journey, and the second four (verses 7-10) for an outward missional journey. Stott sees that the first half of the Beatitudes reveals a progression of resolute logic, and each Beatitude leads to the next and presupposes the one before:¹⁰⁸ followers of Christ begin with “poor in spirit” to acknowledge our spiritual bankruptcy before God; next, we “mourn” over the corruption of our fallen nature; third, we are “meek,” allowing progress in spirituality to condition our behavior; and finally, we “hunger and thirst for righteousness,” where the orientation of life is completely transformed toward God. Stott says of the second half of the Beatitudes, “It turns more from our attitude to God toward the attitude to our fellow human beings.”¹⁰⁹ We begin as “merciful” to men; next, sincerity is denoted by being “pure in heart”; third, the “peacemaker” seeks to reconcile to one another, and finally, we are “persecuted” for the sake of righteousness.

Most importantly, each of the Beatitudes is paired with the adjacent others (vv 3 and 7; 4 and 8; 5 and 9; 6 and 10), such that the inward transformational journey

¹⁰⁶ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 163. The Beatitudes, “especially in the Lukan version, . . . is likely to be more original than Matthew’s spiritualized account.”

¹⁰⁷ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* (Eastford, CT: Martino Publishing, 2011), 34. “You cannot be poor in spirit without mourning; and you cannot mourn without hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and you cannot do that without being one who is meek and a peacemaker. Each one of these in a sense demands the others. In conforming to the blessing that is pronounced, it is impossible to manifest one of these graces without at the same time showing the others.”

¹⁰⁸ John Stott, “The Message of the Sermon on the Mount — Christian Counter-Culture,” in *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 46.

¹⁰⁹ Stott, “Message of the Sermon on the Mount,” 47.

and the outward missional journey are simultaneously interacting with one another. When one is awakened from self-reference, seeing the end of one's limitation, that person will develop a passionate understanding for those who are in the same situation in which one once was (vv 3 and 7). When one purges one's horizontal motivators, one will begin to acquire vertical motivators (vv 4 and 8). When one is illuminated with his authentic self, no more and no less, one will find his place in life (vv 5 and 9). When one desires God so much, he will be ready to pay whatever it costs (vv 6 and 10).

Vocational Pathfinding for the Reduced Missional Life

Three Spiritual Ways to Four Phases of Spiritual Development

In writing “Spiritual Theology” in the *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, Simon Chan recognizes that “In Protestantism, progress is usually understood in terms of an order of salvation, which is broadly consisting of three stages — conversion, sanctification, and glorification.”¹¹⁰ “But these spiritual impulses exist uneasily with modern evangelicals whose understanding of spiritual progress is seldom clearly spelled out, and whose spirituality tends to be defined by [action-oriented] activism and evangelism.”¹¹¹ The result is what Richard Lovelace calls “the sanctification gap,” as “it loses sight of the central importance of sanctification, without the mediation of the sanctified life as previously found in the Puritan or Wesleyan traditions.”¹¹² As a consequence, one moves from conversion to activism.

¹¹⁰ Simon Chan, “Spiritual Theology,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 54.

¹¹¹ Chan, “Spiritual Theology,” 55.

¹¹² Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of the Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 233.

In light of this, the spiritual formation process of Loder, instead of referring to the traditional Protestant approach (conversion, sanctification, glorification), goes back to the classical *Ladder of Perfection* developed by the ancient spiritual leader Pseudo-Dionysius¹¹³ (purgation, illumination, union) and refers to what Mulholland has expanded into four phases of spiritual development:¹¹⁴ awakening, purgation, illuminating, and moving toward unification. Scorgie has a different way of describing the essences in parallel to Mulholland's first three phases (awakening, purgation, illumination): "The first was a willingness to listen, the second was a purity of heart, and this third one is an eagerness to obey."¹¹⁵ Loder makes good use of psychosocial language to narrate the process of spiritual growth happening in the sphere of the human spirit.¹¹⁶ In the end, it is not about competency but about spiritual discernment in alliance with the will of God.

These phases of spiritual development can be compared with the missional discipleship development described in the Beatitudes (see figure 2.1). In the figure, the model of the Beatitudes charts the inward journey of life transformation and the outward journey of missional intention. The translation of the Beatitudes is Peterson's *The Message* because it reflects the rhythms and idioms of the original languages, putting them in contemporary language in such a way that it helps to bring alive the spiritual understanding.

¹¹³ Ernest E. Larkin, "The Three Spiritual Ways," *The Published Articles of Ernest E. Larkin, O.Carm.*, accessed August 3, 2016, <http://carmelnet.org/larkin/larkino92.pdf>.

¹¹⁴ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 81.

¹¹⁵ Scorgie, *Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 121-36.

¹¹⁶ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 64.

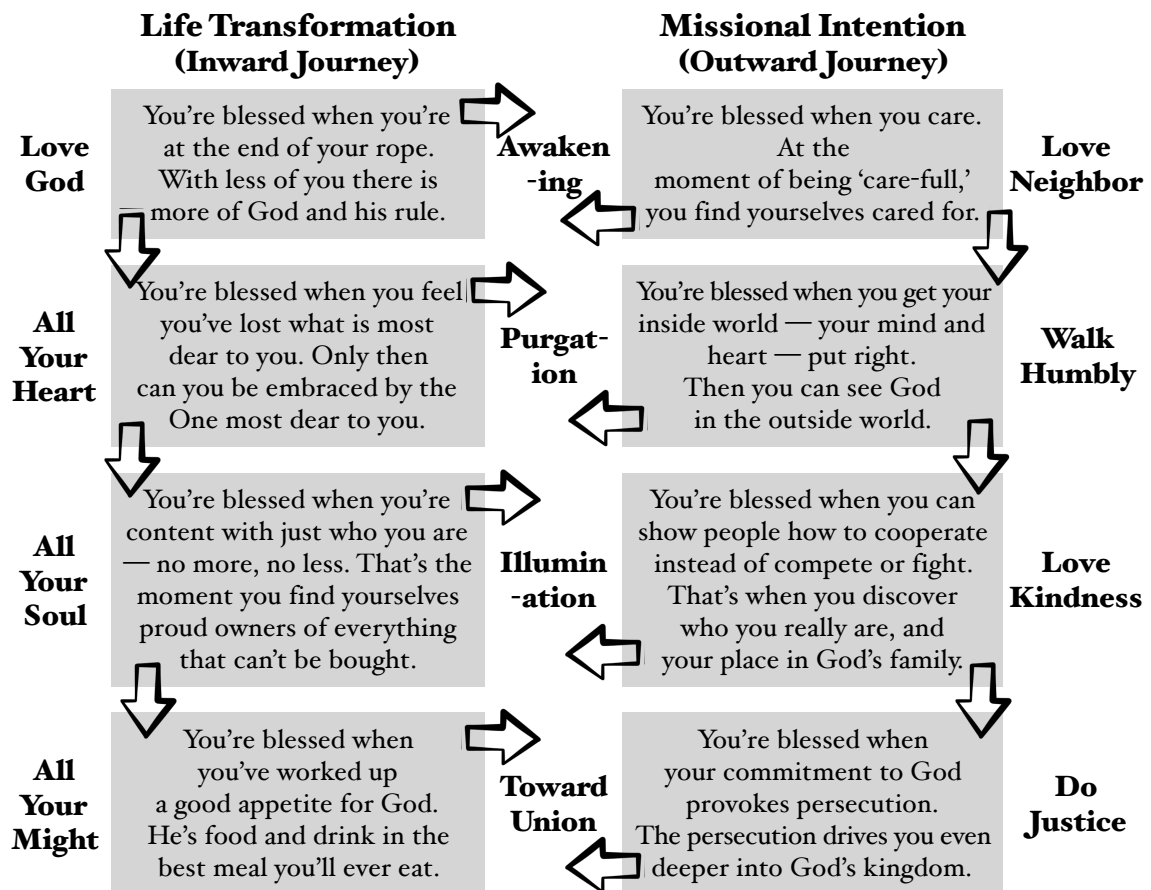


Figure 2.1. The Beatitudes Compared in Four Phases

Inward Transformation and Outward Mission

Leander Keck reminds the people of God “to present the Christian faith and its tradition as an intelligible and plausible construal of reality.”¹¹⁷ Christians, apart from loving God, should be characterized by “a deep love and compassion for persons whose lives are in disarray because they are not yet rightly related to their God.”¹¹⁸ This requires a passion for the gospel and other people. Marva Dawn refers to this

¹¹⁷ Leander E. Keck, *The Church Confident: Christianity Can Repent but It Must Not Whimper* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 105.

¹¹⁸ Keck, *Church Confident*, 116.

as “Double Passion,” when she discusses the kind of nurturing authentic worship should offer for Christ’s followers.¹¹⁹

Throughout the history of the Christian church, such a “Double Passion,” regarding the inner life and the outer life, has frequently been segmented from one another, and the mission and ministry tasks of the church have been separated from each other and from spirituality. Dallas Willard describes the concern: “Spiritual formation is the whole person, the various basic dimensions of the human self are not separate parts, and they are aspects that thoroughly intermingled with each other in their natures and actions.”¹²⁰ Such a perspective flows from a theological anthropology in which the body, mind, soul, and heart are all part of one human whole. Dennis Hollinger has said, “They nurture each other, and each is integral to the expression of the others.”¹²¹

Hollinger recognizes the problem of compartmentalization used by modern people: “The early followers of Christ could not imagine spirituality without ministry and mission, and could not imagine ministry and mission without divine presence and empowerment.”¹²² Ministry, mission, and theology are integrally related to each other, and all are forms of our spirituality. Paul Jensen echoes this same interpretation and expands it: “The empowered inward spirituality, expressed in creating time and space for God through solitary and communal spiritual practices, correlates with

¹¹⁹ Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for This Urgent Time* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 296.

¹²⁰ Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2002), 34.

¹²¹ Dennis P. Hollinger, excerpt from “Head, Heart, and Hands,” Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, accessed August 1, 2016, <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/insidescoop/Hollinger-Head-Heart-Hands.cfm>.

¹²² Dennis P. Hollinger, “Mission and Ministry,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 232.

transforming outward mission, expressed in word and deed.”¹²³ The missional disciple will fulfill her vocation in response to God’s kingdom for the sake of the world, only if she can demonstrate effectively “who they are, what they believe, and what differences that can make”¹²⁴ in our deeds and words.

Boa echoes the “Double Passion” of inwardness and outwardness which can be found in Beatitudes: “Kingdom living is about the inward journey of loving and unification with God, and the outward journey of serving others”; and Christ-focused, “The characters are centered on Christ marked by an inner quality of humility, compassion, gentleness, sincerity (Matthew 5:3-6), and the conduct with others is marked by mercy, truthfulness, reconciliation, and security (Matthew 5:7-10).”¹²⁵

A Spiritual Journey of Missional Discipleship

The Beatitudes in Matthew display an incredible spiritual journey of missional discipleship that is characterized by loving God and loving neighbors. (Matthew 22:7-39) In combining the Jewish *Shema*, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might,” (Deuteronomy 6:5) and “Love your neighbor as yourself,” (Leviticus 19:18) Jesus has chosen to summarize the greatest commandment of all. Such a summary provides a structure for development of missional disciples.

Dean McBride observes that the heart, soul, and might (Deut 6:5, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might”), rather than signifying different psychological spheres, are chosen as semantically

¹²³ Paul L. Jensen, *Subversive Spirituality: Transforming Mission through the Collapse of Space and Time* (Portland, ME: Pickwick, 2009), 4.

¹²⁴ Keck, *Church Confident*, 110.

¹²⁵ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 425.

concentric to reinforce the absolute singularity of personal devotion to God.¹²⁶ “All your heart” denotes the intention or will of the whole person; “all your soul” refers to the whole self being a unity of flesh, will, and vitality; “all your might” accents the superlative degree of total commitment to God; and they come together as the inward journey, “love your God.” In *The Message*, “heart” is linked with having “lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you” (Matt 5:4). The “soul” is “content with just who you are” (Matt 5:5); “might” refers to having “worked up a good appetite for God” (Matt 5:6). All these traits are due to the awakening of “lov[ing] your God,” which is about “less of you” and “more of God’s rule” (Matt 5:3).

In the Beatitudes, the outward journey of loving one’s neighbor echoes another summarized commandment of the Old Testament: “To do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8) Again, referring to *The Message*, to “walk humbly” occurs when “your inside world, your mind and heart [are] put right” (Matt 5:8). To “love kindness” is “when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight” (Matt 5:9). To “do justice” is when “your commitment to God provokes persecution” (Matt 5:10). These Beatitudes are a direct reply to “what does the Lord require of you?” To turn outward to “love your neighbor” is to be “care-full”; then “you find yourselves cared for” (Matt 5:7).

The Beatitudes posits a model community living in obedience to God. Peterson, when he talks about “Christ plays in Creation,” mentions two primary verbs the Gospel of John uses to bring missional disciples into willing and obedient participation in such a creation: believe and love. When we believe, “we respond embracingly to

¹²⁶ Dean S. McBride Jr., “The Yoke of the Kingdom: An Exposition of Deuteronomy 6:4-5,” *Interpretation* 27 no. 3 (1973): 290.

what we cannot see, the things of heaven. Belief is worked out in a life of worship and prayer to *God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*.¹²⁷ It is the “capacity for wonder”¹²⁸ which Peterson encourages us cultivate during Sabbath keeping. It is also an important part of the inward journey of life transformation within the model of the Beatitudes. When we love, “we respond embracingly to what we can see and touch and hear, the things of earth. Love is worked out in lives of intimacy and care among the people in our families and neighborhoods and workplace.”¹²⁹ This is a necessary part of the outward journey of missional intention.

The counterintuitive paradoxes of the Beatitudes (meekness, being merciful, being pure, making peace, suffering for righteousness) display the fact that this new community is a contrast to the usual order of the world. This community now lives in a “new creation” in Christ, in anticipation of the ultimate restoration of what God has revealed most fully in Jesus.

Summary of the Spiritual Formation Essences

This thesis-project reveals that the spiritual lives of young leaders are being constrained by dominated consciousness during their spiritual life development, and there are four characteristics that display their spiritual needs: performing leader, unhelped helper, trapped identity, and ultimately self-focused survivor. A consideration of the transformational, relational, and vocational dynamics reveals that the spiritual

¹²⁷ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 107.

¹²⁸ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 119.

¹²⁹ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 108.

life exhaustion of young leaders is a result of a fragmented life, a disconnected life, and a reduced missional life.

The lives of young leaders are fragmented, lacking a review and integration of life events, in such a way that prevents life from being able to make sense and be transformed under divine guidance. The life timeline of young leaders — past regrets, present struggles, and future outlook — needs to be integrated such that their identity in Christ can be gradually uncovered and explored.

The lives of young leaders are disconnected. Young leaders lack a community that promotes communal grace and authentic relationship building. Young leaders are looking for a relational community of grace, embraced by the presence of Christ and engaged with a wise person for guidance and advice. The relational community of grace needs to be reinstated, allowing young leaders to be able to relate authentically, to reconcile separation, to reposition concern, and to rediscover humanness in life.

The lives of young leaders are reduced missionally. They lack a framework of biblical spiritual formation that can guide them to move their soul-searching toward missional discipleship, becoming persons who love God wholeheartedly and love their neighbors genuinely. Such guidance is more than just an inward life transformation; it is also an outward pathway for missional searching.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

Three areas of literature review are covered in this thesis-project. The first one is to understand the contextual situation as related to young leaders. The second one is to review the perspectives of spiritual formation that need to be considered as foundational. The third one is the vital essences of spiritual formation that need to be put forward in response to the contextual needs of young leaders.

The Contextual Situation Related to Young Leaders

Below are considered areas of the literature review as related to the contextual situation of young leaders: the global context related to the western world, in particular North America; the ethical context as related to Chinese culture; and the local context in Hong Kong.

Global Context — Developed Western

Hong Kong is relatively westernized in term of its sociological structure and daily patterns of living. Being an international city and since the influence of globalization, Hong Kong has become a part of the global village, and what is reflected in the western world sociologically and culturally foreshadows necessary considerations in terms of sociology and culture in Hong Kong.

In *The Fabric of Faithfulness*,¹ Garber mentions a few consciousnesses that affect the development of faith in young leaders. Relativism and pluralism, as well as an

¹ Steven Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief and Behavior* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007).

emotivist culture which asserts the expression of preference, have brought forward the destruction of meaning and moral systems. The internal collaboration of “what life is for” is being fragmentized and compartmentalized; as a result, people lose the ability to move toward an integrated purpose of meaning and cohesive fruitfulness in life.

Garber discusses the educational consciousness; in it, professionalism is dominant while preparing for life in transition to the adult world is only minimal. The stresses of professionalism — techniques and skills — have become a reality in themselves. The laws of pragmatic efficiency and effectiveness within professionalism become the judge of what is moral. The result is people who are technically competent but who have little interest in the whys and wherefores of their competencies.

Garber also discusses the economic consciousness: market capitalism and consumerism are dominant. The emphasis is on the choices of external living patterns that in turn contaminate the worldview and values of how people would expect their life to be. The damaging effect is not contained solely within the economic structure; it overflows to various aspects of human institutions, including the education systems and social structures.

To counter the effects of such an unhealthy dominant consciousness in the society, Garber mentions three strands, conviction, character, and community, as being the fundamental weaving essences for integrating the fabric of faithfulness. Conviction is mainly about worldview and values. After all, it is the intrinsic motivation that drives external behavior and commitment, and it is governed by the worldview and values of the person as regards his belief and faith. The areas of character and community are

discussed, and Garber stresses the importance of re-establishing cohesiveness between faith and behavior, private life and public life, telos and praxis.

In *Almost Christian*,² Dean says the original call of a whole-hearted loving of God and one's neighbors has been put aside. Instead, the Christian faith has declined into "self-fulfilling goodness" and is governed by the "rules of niceness." This latter viewpoint Dean calls "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism." Christianity has become a religion of duties and expectations, rather than a living faith that embodies divine love to others.

In response to "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism," Dean highlights the priority call for a Christian should be involvement in God's story instead of oneself. Dean advises a return to cultivating a genuine and consequential faith in Jesus Christ, in response to the missional call of being part of the divine grand narrative. A Christian not only is to repent and return to the center of loving one's neighbor and to engage in the kingdom view. A Christian also, during participation in the missional context, is to renew one's understanding of the missional principles and refocus on the incarnational characteristics of Christianity.

Dean concludes that every teen needs a sociological environment, a governing ideology, a significant community, a life purpose, and a source of hope in order to be brought up to fit properly into society. This same rationale applies to a spiritual environment in cultivating Christian maturity: need of a congregation, a creed, a missional drive, and an eschatological hope. The current situation of the faith is not due to a structural deficiency; instead, it is the infertile soil which has been contaminated

² Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010).

and therefore cannot produce mature spirituality. And such a contamination comes from modern culture, with its emphasis on individualism, consumerism, market capitalism, and other -isms. Thus, the quest is how to strengthen the spiritual life developmental process of teens.

In *Lost in Transition*,³ Smith shares findings on the values and behaviors of emerging adults during their transition from schooling adolescents to working adults. These findings indicate areas where emerging adults are not well equipped to face the upcoming challenges, including “morality adrift, captive to consumerism, fake feeling of happiness intoxication, shadow side of sexual liberation, civic and political disengagement.”⁴ For young leaders who are crossing over to young adulthood, it is deemed necessary to equip them for a healthier spiritual life in order to be ready for these foreseeable challenges.

The first and most important problem Smith highlights is that of morality adrift. The modern world highlights autonomy; such an emphasis originally was made with a good intention of allowing an individual to be a moral agent, instead of being subjected to external authorities or regulations. However, the author reveals that majority of emerging adults exhibit underdeveloped morality, such as moral sensibility, moral judgment, moral motivation, and moral character. Relativism, as in extreme individualism, has sacrificed the need for moral standards and is gradually diminished into what best fits with one’s personal interests. Without the moral disciplines, emerging adults are deficient in the adult world. They lack awareness of daily moral

³ Christian Smith, Kari Christoffersen, Hilary Davidson, and Patricia Snell Herzog, *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁴ Smith et al., *Lost in Transition*, 1.

problems and ability to confront such problems with a committed moral stand. Such weakness in moral reasoning affects their choices and commitment to what is right for their life and for others. Smith's findings show that emerging adults will eventually realize the issues; for example, material consumption cannot bring depth in life, or alcohol intoxication bring true satisfaction, or sexual liberation bring real intimacy. After all, there is a lack of reflection, criticism, and firm direction within emerging adults. In the end, emerging adults experience an incapability to show commitment to any meaningful goals morally, socially, or politically.

The moment before transition for young leaders is the time that opens a gateway for better preparation in the establishment of moral agency, such as nurturing a proper reflectiveness and awareness against the polluted world of illusions, the establishment of the necessary training tools for moral reasoning, and much more.

In *Emerging Adulthood*,⁵ Arnett tries to define a new category called "Emerging Adulthood" with characteristics that include the age of identity exploration, the age of instability, the self-focused age, the age of feeling in-between, and the age of possibilities. Such a view provides an update of the newly researched developmental stage that young leaders are moving into.

Arnett lists the psychological markers as college students move into adulthood: accepting responsibility for one's actions, making independent decisions, and becoming financially independent. These markers have become more relevant than the sociological markers, such as finishing their education, entering the workforce, marrying, and parenting.

⁵ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens Through the Twenties* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Arnett gives a sense of optimism and advocacy for these emerging adults; instead of looking at this generation as being one of prolonged adolescence and delayed entry into adulthood, Arnett provides a positive and encouraging perspective on this phenomenon. Although some sociologists, economists, and psychologists view this generation as unfocused and noncommittal, Arnett contends that the emerging adults are on a real and reflective quest for personal growth and meaning that may last into their late twenties. It matters only whether there are appropriate guidance and coaching across generations.

Ethical Context — Chinese Believers

In *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*,⁶ Wu and his research team give quite a bit of information about the situation of Christian churches and youth ministry in Hong Kong. And those findings echoes the foreboding of the latest survey presented by Enoch Wong, “Hemorrhaging Faith”⁷ for Canadian Christians and “Second Generation Exodus”⁸ for Canadian Chinese Christians.

In “How Am I Going to Grow Up?”⁹ Wong highlights the longing expressed by second-generation Chinese Canadian evangelicals. They want deep meaning and intimacy in relationships as they pursue belongingness in the context of new

⁶ Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Research Team, *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*, ed. David C. W. Wu and Eric T. H. Lau (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited, 2016).

⁷ Enoch Wong, “Hemorrhaging Faith: An Exploration of Faith Journey of Canadian Youth,” lecture, Carey Seminary Regen Conference, Vancouver, British Columbia, November 20, 2014.

⁸ Enoch Wong, “Second Generation Exodus: The Experience Sharing with Canadian Chinese Church,” lecture, The Alliance Bible Seminary Center of Canada, November 23, 2015.

⁹ Enoch K. C. Wong, “How Am I Going to Grow Up? An Exploration of Congregational Transition among Second-Generation Chinese Canadian Evangelicals and Servant-Leadership,” unpublished doctoral dissertation, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA, 2015.

congregations. “Being held back by, and trapped in the traditional Chinese immigrant culture, they found themselves experiencing stagnation and spiritual dryness, complaining that the ethnic church fostered command and control leadership practices that were both disempowering and encouraging of a ‘permissioning’ culture.”¹⁰ Wong’s findings may refer to environmental and cultural issues, but there are still concerns displayed about the spiritual nurturing the youth ministry may have missed. And in two presentations, “Hemorrhaging Faith” and “Second Generation Exodus,” given in a seminary conference, Wong offers his concluding remarks for churches: “be intergenerational, intentional, supportive, and nonjudgmental; involve them, instill them, inspire them, and invest in them.”

In “Exceedingly Fond: The Asian American Initiative at Fuller Theological Seminary,”¹¹ a promotional video from Fuller Theological Seminary, Fong makes use of the elder brother in Luke 15:11-32 to describe the worldview of Asian Christians: the Asian ethos of hard work. Fong’s reflection describes the view of many people in the Asian next generation, who are more like the elder brother than the younger one. Therefore, it is no wonder people are often drained and serve without joy, and why people show no mercy to the younger ones when they are not as disciplined or well-behaved. Such has been the most rooted spirituality issue with young leaders. If this disposition is left unexamined and young leaders continue to adopt the same worldview, generations of youth will continue to be convinced that God is not fond of them and they would need to work hard to persuade God and others that they are worthy of love.

¹⁰ Wong, “How Am I Going to Grow Up?”, 558.

¹¹ Ken Fong, “Exceedingly Fond: The Asian American Initiative at Fuller Theological Seminary,” accessed August 6, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMkJEPiEtUU>.

In “2016 Survey on Global Chinese Churches Mission and Discipleship,” a survey initiated by the Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism and conducted by survey consultant Asia Insight, the objective is to understand Chinese churches as regards their progress in discipleship building, mission readiness, and barriers to discipleship and mission. A total of 10,000 Chinese churches across 14 countries have responded to this quantitative survey, and a total of 604 qualitative interviews were conducted, among which 114 came from Hong Kong. Ng Chong Hin, chief executive of Asia Insight, summarizes the findings and points out that “the overall discipleship program among the Chinese community is disconnected from building up kingdom perspectives and has been too inward focused on internal church growth only.” The survey also highlights that “discipleship has not been able to connect with, retain and build youths.”¹² The transmission of new life in Christ is supposed to be by imitation and practice of the living faith. But most evangelicals are reduced to a weakened understanding of discipleship, which focuses only on conversion according to doctrinal beliefs, and even in some cases only in name.

Local Context — Hong Kong Churches

“Social Mobility in Hong Kong Getting Harder,”¹³ a press release on March 5, 2013, refers to a 2011 Hong Kong survey, in which chief researcher Victor Zheng gives evidence about downward mobility in Hong Kong and the lack of social opportunities

¹² Chong Hin Ng, “2016 Survey on Global Chinese Churches Mission and Discipleship,” survey presented by Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism, Hong Kong, November 11, 2016, 15, 24.

¹³ Kang-Chung Ng, “Social Mobility in Hong Kong Getting Harder,” *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong edition, March 5, 2013, accessed July 28, 2016, <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1177243/social-mobility-hong-kong-getting-harder-poll-says>.

for the new generation. And in *The Great Escape*,¹⁴ Deaton writes that although people worldwide are healthier, wealthier, and live longer, yet there are still gaping inequalities between people and nations. Deaton highlights “the problem does not solely relate to wealth and career, . . . it is not just a matter of wealth but health as well.”¹⁵ What matters most in Hong Kong is the culture of competition all across society. “The Myth of Champion Begins at the Starting Line”¹⁶ describes how the competition culture goes all the way to kindergarten schooling. The *South China Morning Post* reported that “Depression Hits Half of Hong Kong Secondary Pupils and a Quarter Has Considered Suicide,”¹⁷ according to a city-wide survey (2015) covering about 10,000 pupils. This statistic is alarming, with almost 20 percent of the interviewed youngsters exhibiting moderate to severe symptoms of depression.

*Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*¹⁸ includes a church survey in Hong Kong. In the third quarter of 2014, the dropout rate of youth is close to 50 percent more when compared with 2009 statistics. The concern about the second-generation dropout rate is also high. However, there is no mention about emerging young leaders, those who among all youth are senior in faith, more mature, and supposed to be the future

¹⁴ Angus Deaton, *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origin of Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

¹⁵ Deaton, *Great Escape*, ix.

¹⁶ Centre for Child and Family Science, Education University of Hong Kong, “The Myth of Champion Begins at the Starting Line,” *Metro Daily Hong Kong*, accessed August 6, 2016, <http://www.metrohk.com.hk/index.php?cmd=detail&id=182076>.

¹⁷ Elizabeth Cheung, “Depression Hits Half of Secondary Pupils and a Quarter Has Considered Suicide,” *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong edition, August 31, 2015, accessed February 22, 2017, <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/1853967/depression-hits-just-over-half-hong-kong-secondary>.

¹⁸ *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years*, 49.

leaders of the church. This category, which is apparently the future leadership of evangelicals, seems to be missed on the pastoral radar.

Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years also includes many topics related to various aspects of pastoral ministries in Hong Kong. Among those, “How to Pastor This Continuing Dropout Emerging Generation,” Choi responds to the latest situation and summarizes four areas Hong Kong youth ministry needs to address: “growth with depth, life mentoring, missional discipleship, and vocation pathfinding.”¹⁹ This review gives attention to the ministry gaps Hong Kong faces, in particular for emerging young leaders.

In *Not One Less*,²⁰ Choi talks about the various faces of youth in Hong Kong, in particular during their various developmental crises. He describes ten different kinds of adolescents: those who are unsatisfied with life, in search of identity, indifferent and alienated, wounded psychologically, at the edge, passive and pessimistic, could not care outsider, pursuing success, migrants and rootless, and those whose life is moving gradually toward maturity. Though the book was published in 2005, it does provide a good overview of what kinds of challenges youth in Hong Kong face.

Perspectives of Spiritual Formation to Consider

The sections that follow review literature that relates to various perspectives about the spiritual formation of young leaders. The evangelically informed perspective,

¹⁹ Philemon Choi, “How to Pastor This Continue Dropout Emerging Generation: Integration of Spiritual Formation and Discipleship Training,” in Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Research Team, *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*, ed. David C. W. Wu and Eric T. H. Lau (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited, 2016), 174-81.

²⁰ Philemon Choi, *Not One Less: Rethinking the Youth and the Ministry* (Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2005).

as represented in the work of Glen Scorgie, is the primary reference in response to ministry gaps in youth work. Scorgie's perspective is supplemented by the christologically informed view of Eugene Peterson. The moment of transformation, discussed in the work of James Loder, is the primary reference in response to the spiritual journey of faith development and spiritual transformation. The whole life spirituality found in the work of Keith Meyer is the primary reference in response to the spiritual needs of young leaders; it is supplemented by various facets of spirituality found in the work of Kenneth Boa.

Evangelically Informed Perspective

In *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, Scorgie considers what spirituality is: "it is about living all of life before God in the transforming and empowering presence of his Spirit."²¹ Using a biblically informed view, Scorgie traces the contours of such spirituality and offers a model with three dynamics: relational, transformational, and vocational.

The relational dynamic is about Christ with us where "with" represents that Christ is present with us. People are created for a community, but sin has produced alienation; yet, Christ is restoring intimate friendship with God, experiencing authentic community, and reconciling with one another. The transformational dynamic is about Christ in us, where "in" represents that Christ is alive and working in us. People are created to be purposeful and whole, but sin has damaged us; yet, God is restoring holiness, healing wounds, and bringing forward the renewal of the mind. The vocational

²¹ Glen G. Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality: Three Dimensions of Life with God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 27.

dynamic is about Christ working through us where “through” represents Christ accomplishing his purposes through his residence in our life as a king. People were created for joyful participation in God’s work in the world, but sin has made our lives seem futile and meaningless; yet, the Spirit is rebuilding purpose and meaning in our lives and calling upon our participation.

Relational Dynamic

Scorgie recognizes the challenges that come from the inward curve of the sinful self and prevent the relationship of a Christian from growing deep with God and others. “Our self-centered bent is reinforced by the individualistic spirit of culture . . . more concerned with mastering one’s environment or improving oneself . . . taking the relationship as a mere means to an end . . . siz[ing] up people according to their usefulness . . . and tend[ing] to treat God the same.”²² Psalm 73.26 says, “My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.” God is the psalmist’s wise and discerning choice because God is the one who satisfies all his deepest needs. People are invited to experience this truth such that they can gain real strength in their lives, as they are no longer terrified by the prospect of being alone, or pressured by those who wish to overpower them.

Relationship with God involves treasured moments of the blessings of God’s presence, with the ecstasy and joy of revelation and signs of the supernatural, and long stretches of the peace that passes all understanding and awareness. Relationship with God is also about keeping company, staying alert and responsive to God’s voice,

²² Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 42.

about being in harmony and enjoying oneness of purpose and intent. And when the relationship moves further into a more profound friendship, it gives us an enjoyment of full acceptance, deep intimacy, and safety to be honest and share our heart. Scorgie highlights, “Within this relation, we are no more alone, . . . there is a God . . . God gives us a new standing before him, draws us into experiences of his unspoken presence, and even into interactive encounters with him.”²³ That is what Scorgie comes to describe as “the confidence that God is good for us now draws us to into a communion, opens up the possibility of a friendship with God characterized by a reciprocating delight.”²⁴

Scorgie sees the essence of such conversion is “to align one’s life in obedience to the loving impulses of the Spirit of God.”²⁵ And the sign of such authentic conversion is a turning to the needs of others. “It is the self-giving love of God that contagiously infects all those who draw close to him, which begin a regenerated journey that leads beyond self-absorption to welcoming others, and participate in the expanding web of relationships that grace has made possible.”²⁶ The triune God is a relational community, and the God-like capacity for relation is reflected in human interactions with the rest of the created order. Personal fulfillment and destiny are to be found by taking places and playing parts in a more extensive web of relationships. God designs human to experience community with others and harmony with nature; in such a way, they can find greater fulfillment and joy in it.

²³ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 53.

²⁴ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 53.

²⁵ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 61.

²⁶ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 69.

The natural tendency of the wounded person is to set up protective barriers against future harm. However, God intends for his people to embody a reconciling presence, and the church to be a countercultural community in which members practice patience, forgiveness, kindness, affirmation, understanding, and inclusion, in such a way to demonstrate the peace, harmony, and shalom in it. There are two means to forgive others; the first is therapeutic and the second is restorative. Therapeutic forgiving realizes the benefit of healing to the victim, where forgiving involves relinquishing all claims to future payback or compensation from the perpetrator, finally letting go and be freed to get on with life. Restorative forgiving aims to go beyond the healing of a victim to the rebuilding of relational harmony between the estranged parties, and it hopes fully trusting conditions can be restored.

Transformational Dynamic

Scorgie refers to Rom 8:29, “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” It is God’s purpose that the likeness of Christ will be replicated among those who follow him. Christ became the model for Christians. The way of transformation is not through written normative guidelines or lofty ethical ideals; instead, it is the spirit of Christ encouraging us to be more faithful in the Holy One and leading us toward the perfection which has been embodied in the timeless likeness of Christ.

Scorgie sees most of the evil in the world originating from inside human hearts, which is why many Christian spiritualities practice self-examination, cultivate virtue,

and embrace spiritual disciplines to change from the inside out. As sinners, humans tend to be out of touch with their true selves, as it is intolerable. They will deny and run away until they grasp the assurance of God's unconditional love and forgiveness through Christ. Only then people will find the courage to face the truth about themselves. "The ultimate goal is always the transformation of the heart, that inter-command center of a person's being."²⁷ Scorgie refers to such a journey to the self as what Teresa of Avila, the sixteenth-century Spanish mystic, described as "a movement into self-knowledge."²⁸ Scorgie wants to show that "Paul teaches us that we ought to regard our old nature and its persistent demands for unholy satisfaction as falling away in the act of dying. God is engaged in soul-crafting and the formation of virtue in us."²⁹ It is the restorative work of God; yet, it is in a willingly helpful way to the impulses of the Holy Spirit that Christ's followers are invited to participate in this process.

Moreover, Scorgie sees that sinful behaviors of oneself or from others always cause pain and suffering, and its negative impact on emotional lives can be enormous. Many times there is a payoff in the sense of identity; consequently, it tends to weaken one's ability to respond rightly in particular during difficult circumstances in life. Scorgie refers to Exod 15:26, "I am the Lord, your healer"; the good news is that Christ by his Spirit is purifying and healing our souls. There are three sources of these wounds: one's sinful behaviors, the sinful behaviors of others, and the realities of a fallen and dangerous world. And the shape of the wounds may include addictive bondages,

²⁷ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 78.

²⁸ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 79.

²⁹ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 83.

runaway fears, repulsive self-loathing, and inability to forgive. People can act out irrationally because the powerful impulses coming from the subconscious are unable to be overcome. They can cause personal anxieties and unsettledness or interpersonal tensions and conflicts. Worst of all, these wounds keep people from taking the risks of opening themselves up to love and be loved; as a consequence, they will remain profoundly lonely and incomplete.

Scorgie points out, “Too often we are insufficiently in touch with our true selves, to be more than vaguely aware of what is bothering us on the inside.”³⁰ Sometimes it is only through periods of solitude, conversation with real soul friends, and engaging with discerning mentors that an awareness of wounds can lead people to look for God’s healing. Scorgie also writes, “So much of our pain stems from a false understanding of reality. We are the victims of imagined terrors, skewed perceptions, misguided hopes.”³¹ He continues, “But the life of the spirit [is] by integrating us in the real order established by God, puts us in the fullest possible contact with reality — not as we imagine it, but as it really is.”³² It renews our minds by helping us see things as they really are. Scorgie realizes “we are unable to get in touch with who we really are until we embrace God’s estimate of us . . . and that estimate is presented with clarity and authority in Scripture.”³³ Scorgie stresses the same kind of transformation as the apostle Paul — by the renewing of our minds — and the Bible is the chief instrument of this renewal.

³⁰ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 97.

³¹ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 98.

³² Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 98.

³³ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 98.

Vocational Dynamic

Scorgie refers to Augustine, whose *The City of God* offered bewildered Christians at the time of a failing Roman Empire a way to make meaning of life. “Things were not pointless, nor chaotic; rather, they were unfolding under a roof of meaning.”³⁴ Despite the chaos on the surface and engulfing events, there is a purposeful design to existence in history, and Scorgie writes, “We are to orient our lives accordingly and discover the significance by contributing to this great overarching purpose.”³⁵

Scorgie realizes many Christians think of their old self, that they are obliged to return Christ by way of duties and responsibilities. However, Scorgie refers to Bachneul, who sees “our commission deliberately as a gift rather than a duty.”³⁶ In Eph 2:10, we are told, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” God’s spirit inevitably stirs people to find their place in the grand scheme of God’s higher purposes. God is not imposing a duty on us but an incredible gift. Scorgie concludes that calling is a gift from God: “it satisfies our deep need to be creatively useful and gives us the opportunity to invest our life energy in something of significance.”³⁷ It explains our often unfulfilled longings for significance, our restless efforts in looking for something more.

Scorgie refers to Matt 6:33, “But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” And Scorgie highlights that

³⁴ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 106.

³⁵ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 107.

³⁶ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 110.

³⁷ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 110.

the kingdom does involve us, but it is not primarily about us; yet, a person's creational design is to serve a purpose bigger than his sustainment and survival. As Scorgie writes, "We find real significance only as we are able to align ourselves with a goal greater than our own personal comfort and security."³⁸ Christian calling is liberating as we can put our energy into the fulfilling use of our gifts and enjoy the experience of being creative and making genuine contributions to the cause of Christ. Scorgie continues, "Serenity comes by accepting our identity and then engaging in diligent service. Instead of trying to be something or someone we are not, we can give our attention with joy to the task of being all we were meant to be."³⁹

People are designed to contribute to something bigger and to matter more than themselves. It is part of what makes lives meaningful. Scorgie highlights, "God calling on our lives will always be in accord with our deepest identity and our true self."⁴⁰ Scorgie refers to Frederick Buechner, who says, "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."⁴¹ A Christian's vocation will consist of passionate, enthusiastic, motivated involvement in something of useful service to the world. It is of two intersecting lines; God calls people to what they need to do and what the world needs to have done. People must be in touch with who they are as well as acquainted with God's heart for the world before they can discover their calling.

³⁸ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 113.

³⁹ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 132.

⁴⁰ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 126.

⁴¹ Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*, 127.

Christologically Informed Perspective

In *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places*,⁴² Peterson focuses on four important terms: spirituality, Christ, soul, and fear-of-the-Lord. The name of the book reflects a dominant concern for Christology; however, the emphasis is sketched more broadly through a trinitarian structure. Peterson asserts that spirituality is the attention that we give to the details of a soulful life; such attention prevents one from focusing on his own experiences rather than God, keeping him in a personal relationship with God, and bringing congruence to life. Fear-of-the-Lord is to live responsively to God; it is about giving attention to what we pray and live, about living what we believe about God. Peterson divides his insights into three sections. First, exploring “Christ Plays in Community” shows how one can live and relate to others. Second, “Christ Plays in History” explains how one can interpret and reframe things that happen. And third, “Christ Plays in Creation” tells how one can live a life in the world where we live.

Christ through Creation That Reignites the Reduced Missional Life

Peterson employs Gen 1-2 and the Gospel of John to establish the importance of God’s Word speaking creation into existence and the Word becoming flesh. The two passages yield insights about the rhythms of time and the gift of place, Sabbath keeping and the cultivation of wonder, receiving the Holy Spirit, and participation in creation with belief and love. Peterson reminds Christians that we are never spectators but always participants with God; thus, sabbath and wonder, belief and love are the best means to experience Christ’s presence in creation.

⁴² Eugene H. Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005).

About time and space, Peterson writes, “Time is a gift through which we participate in the present and daily work of God.”⁴³ Such participation provides “the medium by which we become present to the moment, and the rhythmic relation of this moment to all other moments, moments past and moments future, giving us a history by securing us in a living way to our past; at the same time it provides us with seeds of hope that grow into anticipation and purpose and fulfillment, tying us into a future.”⁴⁴ And in specific space, “God deals with us where we were and not where we would like to be; God deals with us where we are and not where we would like to be.”⁴⁵ It is at such particular times and spaces that people are plunged into a world of freedom and necessity.

In the Gospel of John, Peterson points out that there are two primary verbs that John uses to bring forward a willing and obedient participation in creation: “believe and love where both verbs involve in a reality that is other than ourselves.”⁴⁶ When we believe, it is an embracing response “to what we cannot see, the things of heaven.”⁴⁷ Belief is worked out in a life of worship and prayer to the triune God. When we love, it is an embracing response “to what we can see and touch and hear, the things of earth.”⁴⁸ Love is worked out in lives of intimacy and care among the people in our neighborhoods. To believe and love are the ways Christians participate in creation.

⁴³ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 67.

⁴⁴ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 72.

⁴⁵ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 75.

⁴⁶ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 107.

⁴⁷ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 107.

⁴⁸ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 108.

Christ in History That Restores the Fragmented Life

Life is messy; therefore, Christian spirituality is also messy. God's method of addressing this messiness is the death of Jesus Christ. Exodus and Mark are the two grounding texts, and the Bible shows God is interested also in history: names and places, events and stories. God is a God who saves in history; through the exodus and the death of Jesus, Peterson shows that God makes human history different. The people of God celebrate the practices of Eucharist and hospitality, and in remembering and welcoming the very acts of God, life is reframed and transformed.

Peterson realizes popular forms of spirituality tend to avoid history (about things that have happened, are happening, or will happen) as the subject matter and context for nurturing the soul. Dealing with history means dealing with a world where things rarely turn out the way people think they should. People tend to avoid these messy aspects. Peterson points out it is "in the mess of history in which we find ourselves, Jesus found himself, and the remarkable thing is that he embraced it."⁴⁹ Peterson writes, "God is at work in our history; he heals and helps; he forgives and blesses; he takes a creation in ruins because of human willfulness and patiently begins to make a new creation of it; he takes a world corrupted by evil and begins the long, slow work of transforming it into a holy place."⁵⁰ Most of the time, people interpret history as "sin-defined," but discovering the wonders of God's work in history "draws us into an understanding and participation in history that is salvation-defined."⁵¹ Thus Peterson encourages Christ's followers, "If we want to live as followers

⁴⁹ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 137.

⁵⁰ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 169.

⁵¹ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 178.

of Jesus, live the way Jesus wants us to live, receive Jesus' life as our life, our restored identity in the image of God, then we also follow him into this so-called mess of history."⁵²

Christ with Community That Reconnects the Disconnected Life

Peterson places Deuteronomy's Ten Commandments in dialogue with Luke-Acts to reflect on baptism, love, and prayer. Baptism initiates us into the life of the Trinity and the body of Christ where love is the way to live in a community through long-term cultivation, and prayer is essential to keep us connected with Jesus and the community of Christ. All persons are alike in that no one can live long in isolation. The reality of community reminds us that we must learn to put aside self-focused story telling and participate in God's divine story instead. The characteristics of this community are, as Peterson states, "The more we get involved in what God is doing, the less we find ourselves running things; the more we participate in God's work as revealed in Jesus, the more is done to us, and the more is done through us. The more we practice resurrection, the less we are on our own or by ourselves."⁵³

Peterson continues, "It begins not by adding something to our lives but by renouncing the frenetic ego life, clearing out the cultural and religious clutter, turning our backs on what we commonly summarize as 'the world, the flesh, and the devil.'"⁵⁴ It begins with baptismal repentance, changing the way of thinking, behaving, and

⁵² Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 143.

⁵³ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 231.

⁵⁴ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 309.

imagining; then, baptismal submission in following Christ. As Peterson describes it, “We have renounced initiative and taken up obedience. We have renounced clamoring assertions in favor of quiet listening. We watch Jesus work; we listen to Jesus speak; we accompany Jesus into new relationships, to odd places and odd people. Keeping company with Jesus, observing what he does and listening to what he says, develops into a life of answering God, a life of responding to God, which is to say, a life of prayer.”⁵⁵

If repentance and submission in baptism are the focal practices that provide the resurrection identity in the community, love is the way of life congruent with that identity. Peterson stresses that “baptism forms us in the practice of love.”⁵⁶ The primary task of the resurrection community is to maintain this lifelong cultivation of love in all the messiness of its families, neighborhoods, congregations, and missions. And Peterson looks at it, not as a responsibility to fulfill, but a living to embrace: “Love is intricate, demanding, glorious, deeply human, and God-honoring, but — and here’s the thing — never a finished product, never an accomplishment, always flawed to some degree or other.”⁵⁷ After all, the most distinctive thing about Christian love is that it is commanded, not urged, not encouraged, not strived for as virtual. And this command is not one item among others but the non-negotiable centerpiece of the life of the resurrection community.

⁵⁵ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 309.

⁵⁶ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 310.

⁵⁷ Peterson, *Ten Thousand Places*, 313.

Bases of Knowing and Transformation

In *The Transforming Moment*,⁵⁸ Loder mentions there are three aspects of self to be itself: the phenomenon of self-reflection, the self in self-relatedness, and the self-as-spirit. Self-reflection is the ability to know that one is a human being, while “the key lies in unpacking the ‘I.’”⁵⁹ Self-relatedness is the “knowing within oneself and together with another self-reflecting person.”⁶⁰ Self-as-spirit expresses “the nature of being-itself as grounded in the power [of its Source] that posits it when it lets the being of others flourish.”⁶¹ In other words, the self, being in the image of God is truly itself when it is engaged in the ongoing act of giving love, just like his heavenly Father. Such distinguishing marks of identity formation are more than a developmental task toward self-fulfillment.

In “Knowing as Transforming Event,”⁶² Loder focuses on the transformation of conviction as a process of the knower going through a set of knowing events. There are five steps in what Loder describes as the “Transformation Logic.”⁶³ First is conflict as an apparent rupture in the event; then, an interlude of scanning for possible solutions, followed by the constructive act of the imagination, opening up of the knower with a release of the conflicting tensions, and finally interpretation of the imaginative solution. The process begins when there is an apparent rupture in the knowing context, and

⁵⁸ James E. Loder, “Knowing as Transforming Event,” in *The Transforming Moment: Understanding Convictional Experiences* (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers and Howard, 1989), 67-92.

⁵⁹ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 78.

⁶⁰ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 78.

⁶¹ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 79.

⁶² Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 35-66.

⁶³ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 37-40.

conflict initiates the knowing response. The turning point resides in the middle step, the construction of insight that constitutes the turning point of the knowing event; in such a way, a new perception, perspective, or worldview is bestowed on the knower. And the final step of interpretation is a transformed behavioral and symbolically constructed world of the original context and conviction. The disciplines of reflection and meditation on events in life are deemed necessary to build on.

Spiritual Formation During Transition

In “Convictional Knowing in Human Development,”⁶⁴ Loder highlights that most of life growth is carried on not at stages but between stages. “It is the pattern of new life by which we make disordered things make sense; it is the dynamic order by which we construct fixed or stable orders; it is the process by which we compose content.”⁶⁵

Loder refers to the concept of “orthogenesis.”⁶⁶ as suggested by Piaget: that there is a tendency of a living organism to unfold in a given direction with relative disregard for the constraints of the environment. And Loder explains four processes that are involved. First is differentiation; initially, equilibrium and a relatively universal condition pertains, which is confronted by new environmental demands that disrupt the equilibrium, and the emerging potentials call for higher levels of integration. Second is specification; the personality undergoes a period of specialization and maturation, developing on their own schedule and reaching toward integration in the next stage. Third is integration; both a

⁶⁴ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 123-56.

⁶⁵ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 128.

⁶⁶ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 127.

functional and structural coordination of the differentiated and specified aspects of the developing personality serve as a foundation for the next universal condition for subsequent differentiation and reintegration of the ego. Fourth is result; it generates its own reinforcement, the efficiency of a more well-integrated pattern that gains the rewards of adaptational success and promotes new explorations.

Loder quotes from Levi-Strauss's findings on mythology, where generation after generation of human beings display a pattern of spiritual formation; "not only into stories people tell, but also into stories that tell people who they are, why they are, and what is their destiny."⁶⁷ There is a compelling "sense of an ending."⁶⁸ that each transition of life calls people toward an intent of completion; as Lode describes it, "The transcendent relationship of the Spiritus Creator to every aspect of human experience [provides] the guiding pattern of the human spirit that generate[s] something that is spiritually satisfying."⁶⁹ The transformational logic that Loder describes permeates more than an aspect of next stage of human development: the root of the ultimate transformation is not a form of progressive development but what one is supposed to be created for governs how the transition is to be brought about.

Spiritual Formation in Christ

In "The Fourfold Knowing Event,"⁷⁰ Loder mentions four dimensions of being human: the environment (World), selfhood (Self), the possibility of not being (Void),

⁶⁷ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 130.

⁶⁸ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 130.

⁶⁹ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 153.

⁷⁰ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 67-92.

and the possibility of new being (Holy). The World is where an authentic human should view itself from inside a composed situation, not only to be destined to compose and to be able to choose one's destiny but also to risk being composed by the world and lose the sense of what it means to be. The Self is about one that could transcend the embodiment of being human and repeatedly recompose its world of the living. The Void is the possibility of not being and the self's inability to be itself; it goes far beyond the sense of vanity in society and culture, space and time, where the ultimate telos toward which all experiences of nothingness could point to. The Holy is the state of one not only implicitly being human but explicitly a profound manifestation of the human spirit in being-itself. Loder describes it as "when serenity comes up out of anxiety, joy out of depression, hope out of hopelessness; when good is returned for evil, forgiveness replaces retaliation, and courage triumphs over fear; then we recognize the moment of something beyond the personality and mental health."⁷¹ According to the framework of Loder, the central turning point in the transformational knowing event toward Holy is "an eruption of new being in the presence of the imminent void; it is a manifestation of the abundance with which being-itself supplies the deepest needs of human being."⁷² The ultimate state of being-itself in the Christian faith is Jesus Christ, and during the process, the self will begin to recompose its world in the courses of all these transformational knowing he is experiencing.

In "Convictional Knowing,"⁷³ Loder wants to make it clear that the preliminary placing of convictional experience is in Christ. Loder points out that the Self is afraid

⁷¹ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 89.

⁷² Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 87.

⁷³ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 93-122.

of containment; thus, it runs away from a transparent relationship with the Holy. Such fearfulness will end up in loneliness, anxiety, and despair. However, Loder reminds of the Christian conviction which “claims that Jesus Christ has plunged into the abyss and filled it with his nature, and His spiritual presence has transformed the cross and void.”⁷⁴ In other words, the truth of Christ’s revelation will transform the subject from a knower into one who is fully known. This ongoing spiritual communion will continue to call the believer into an advancing spiritual journey throughout life.

Whole Life Informed Perspective

In *Whole Life Transformation*⁷⁵ and *The Kingdom Life*,⁷⁶ Meyer sees the journey of human life is a process of experiencing lifelong changes; thus, spiritual formation is a continual process of transforming the whole person, including the healing of wounds and rebellion.

Meyer speaks honestly of the transformation gap in today’s church as the result of a reduced gospel, a gospel that leaves out the idea of a significant whole life change and chagrin for existing sin. Meyer describes his personal experience: “a hole in his heart, a less than fulfilling life, and a flaw in his character — filled as he was with all sorts of anger, lust, ambition among others.”⁷⁷ Much of this echoes the situation of young leaders.

⁷⁴ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 120.

⁷⁵ Keith Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation: Becoming the Change Your Church Needs* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010).

⁷⁶ Keith Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” in *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 139-64.

⁷⁷ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 17.

Meyer talks further about the “sanctification gap,”⁷⁸ which he refers to what Lovelace in *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*⁷⁹ identifies as the gap in current evangelical theology. Meyer describes the effect of such as “double life,”⁸⁰ and he points out that there are three related spiritual issues: “performing, unhelped, trapped.”⁸¹ These are the blueprint of responses to the spiritual needs of young leaders in this thesis-project.

In reference to the performing; Meyer talks about people who are assuming various responsibilities in the ministry but display “subtle issue of performance,” which is “about people pleasing their authorities, control and ambition.”⁸² This performing attitude is further affirmed when they are promoted in the leadership structure.

Writing about the unhelped; Meyer refers to what Sandra Wilson calls “Unhelped Helpers,” or people have not dealt with their childhood struggles and scars from grown-up experiences. Meyer writes, “They are less than helpful helpers because of their own misbeliefs, inaccurate identities, disrespectful relating patterns, and distorted concepts of God.”⁸³ If this brokenness goes undetected, people will attempt to control others in response to one’s deceitful expectations.

Regarding the trapped, Meyer realizes metaphors in the Bible for spiritual development focus on a lifetime duration of growth, such as training for a race, wandering in the wilderness, and healing of woundedness and rebellion. It is only in

⁷⁸ Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” 143.

⁷⁹ Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 229-37.

⁸⁰ Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” 145.

⁸¹ Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” 149-53.

⁸² Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 150.

⁸³ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 64.

human culture that the primary metaphors are in contrast to the Scriptures, or what Meyer describes as “being those of quick fixes based on techniques, tools, and programs.”⁸⁴ By going along the way of human culture, people are trapped in a mentality of getting things done and problem solving; human life would lose its consciousness and become faceless in such a mechanical process.

Meyer says, “Many people have been taking their ‘real life’ and ‘spiritual life’ as two different categories.”⁸⁵ The journey of the human life should be a process of experiencing lifelong changes in relationships, physical maturation, sufferings, goals, desires, and hopes. The wholeness of life involves going through all these struggles; Christians should experience the togetherness of God and his guidance throughout life.

Typologically Informed Perspective

In *Conformed to His Image*,⁸⁶ Kenneth Boa seeks to encourage, teach, and equip people to conform progressively to Christ’s image. Boa highlights “in these postmodern times, there is a growing desire for an authentic spirituality that will touch our lives in a more meaningful and practical way.”⁸⁷ Thus, Boa categorizes spirituality in twelve facets that can be cross-referenced to the typology of orientation, such as the Holmes’ Christian Spirituality (Mind, Heart, Apophatic, Cataphatic); psychological (the Myers-Briggs type [MBTI]); personality temperament (DISC), and so on. Boa sees “those

⁸⁴ Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” 139.

⁸⁵ Meyer, “Whole-Life Transformation,” 146.

⁸⁶ Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

⁸⁷ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 20.

who follow Christ tend to gravitate toward different spiritual activities that nurture their preferential patterns.”⁸⁸

As Boa describes them, “The Gospels are not biographies but highly selective thematic portraits that reveal different aspects of Christ’s life that should stand in dynamic tension with one another.”⁸⁹ No one approach reduces the nuances of the spiritual life into a single formula. There are a variety of pathways in spiritual life development that can contribute to the dynamic process of spiritual growth; Boa lists “Twelve Facets of Spirituality.”⁹⁰ Many young leaders are in search of their worth, value, intimacy, and roles in their Christian life. They will be provoked to explore the considerations on being versus doing in Christ, biblically sound motivations for following the faith, ways of relating to God as well as others, and committed contributions to the community of faith. Among the twelve facets of Boa’s spirituality, four are related to the discussion of this thesis-project: process, motivated, relational, and corporate spirituality.

In facet 8, “Process Spirituality,”⁹¹ Boa points out that existing cultures emphasize human doings rather than human beings. The world tells us that we are determined by what we have achieved and accomplished. But Scripture teaches us the basis is who we are in Christ. The dynamics of growth are then inside out rather than outside in. One needs to be faithful to the “Process of Life,” which focuses on abiding in

⁸⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 472.

⁸⁹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 20.

⁹⁰ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 20-23. “The twelve facets include Relational, Paradigm, Disciplined, Exchanged-Life, Motivated, Devotional, Holistic, Process, Spirit-Filled, Warfare, Nurturing, and Corporate.”

⁹¹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 255-90.

Christ and practicing his presence. Boa raises the concern that nowadays people tend to be “human doings rather than human beings.”⁹² Rather, spirituality should be concerned with faithfulness during the ongoing journey, and not living from delivering one product to another. “Instead of living in the future, we are encouraged to be alive to the present in light of our future hope.”⁹³ This would involve a daily process of growing in grace and living in faith, hope, and love. “In his grace, the Lord invites us to cooperate with the formative work of his Holy Spirit in our lives by engaging in the disciplines of faith, repentance, and obedience and by trusting in his ways and in his timing.”⁹⁴ To maintain attention to the heart is essential: the habit of inviting God to search the heart and reveal “any grievous way” inside. (Ps 139:24) “By inviting Jesus to examine our intentions and priorities, we open ourselves to his good but often painful work of exposing our manipulative and self-seeking strategies, our hardness of heart, our competitively driven resentments, and our pride.”⁹⁵

In facet 5, “Motivated Spirituality,”⁹⁶ people are motivated to approve their own needs for security, significance, and fulfillment, yet they turn to the wrong places to have their needs met. Scripture reveals many motivators: fear, love, gratitude, identity, and purpose, as well as hope. Boa discusses these motivators, such that people can be transformed and be more motivated by the things God declares to be important than by the things the world says are important. Boa raises an enlightening question: “Why do we do what we do?” And he highlights the importance of developing Christian faith

⁹² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 255.

⁹³ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 255.

⁹⁴ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 259.

⁹⁵ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 278.

⁹⁶ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 127-52.

and conviction; “if we choose to acknowledge the truth of Scripture, we will begin to see God and ourselves in a new light.”⁹⁷ Boa uses “vertical and horizontal motivators”⁹⁸ to describe their differences in nature. Horizontal motivators he terms worldly and temporal, including fear of loss, guilt, pride, the hope of personal gain, reputation, prestige, and pleasure. Vertical motivators from Scripture are invisible and not yet are related to the long term, including no other options, fear of the Lord, love and gratitude, rewards, identity in Christ, purpose as well as hope, and longing for God. And there are processes involved that allow these motivators to be internalized: the discipline of mental renewal throughout the lifetime, equipping through good teaching, and fellowship with like-minded people along the spiritual journey.

In facet 1, “Relational Spirituality,”⁹⁹ Boa highlights that God is communal and relational. He originates a personal relationship with us, and our high and holy calling is to respond to his loving initiatives. By relating to God and responding to his loving initiatives, we will discover who and whose we are as we come to see ourselves as God sees us; we have a different identity in Christ. Thus, we become secure enough to become others-centered rather than self-centered, and this enables us to become givers rather than grabbers. Boa comes to define the biblical view of self-love in this way: “loving ourselves correctly means seeing ourselves as God see us.”¹⁰⁰ And this, in turn, is the key to loving others compassionately. The better people grasp their identity in Christ, the more broadly they can see themselves as God see them, and the more

⁹⁷ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 144.

⁹⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 127.

⁹⁹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 27-56.

¹⁰⁰ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 35.

their actions would reflect Christlike character. Within the functioning youth ministry, young leaders for most times have a dual identity as a follower as well as a leader. As a follower, a supportive assistance nature has a danger in seeking affirmation from an affected person. Boa writes, “The more we are impressed by Him, the less we will be impressed by people, power, and things.”¹⁰¹ The focus is nonetheless a relationship with Christ: “The more we love Him, the greater our willingness to trust and obey Him in the things he calls us to do.”¹⁰² As a leader, a performance-seeking nature has a danger in making people into means or objects. Boa says, “As we grow in our understanding of God’s unconditional love and acceptance of us in Christ, we are increasingly liberated from using people to meet our needs.”¹⁰³ The transforming moment is “loving Christ more than people increases our capacity to love, serve, forgive, and give ourselves away for people.”¹⁰⁴

In facet 12, “Corporate Spirituality,”¹⁰⁵ Boa underlines the fact that people come to faith as individuals, but they grow in community. For a community to facilitate spiritual growth, a meaningful context of encouragement, accountability, and worship is essential, as it will involve the others-centered use of spiritual gifts for mutual edification. Thus, other important essences of such a community would include soul care, servant leadership, mutual accountability, and life renewal. Boa describes this as “an authentic community with a soul-care ministry,”¹⁰⁶ where believers are connected

¹⁰¹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 32.

¹⁰² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 31.

¹⁰³ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 42.

¹⁰⁴ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 42.

¹⁰⁵ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 415-49.

¹⁰⁶ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 438.

to authentic people who have progressed further down the road than the others. They are accountable for each other in building a renewed life in Christ. And Boa in reference to the Beatitudes highlights that there is an inwardness and an outwardness in such a community. “Kingdom living is about the inward journey of loving and unification with God, and the outward journey of serving others,” where the characters of servant leaders “are centered on Christ marked by an inner quality of humility, compassion, gentleness, sincerity (Matthew 5:3-6), and the conduct with outer is marked by mercy, truthfulness, reconciliation, and security (Matthew 5:7-10).”¹⁰⁷

Spiritual Formation Essences Related to Young Leaders

The following sections of the literature review relate to the three realities of spiritual formation (transformational, relational, and vocational). These realities are reviewed as contextual needs of young leaders (identity exploration, wholistic spirituality, and missional discipleship), as well as how they apply to spiritual life development for young leaders.

Transformational Growth for Identity Exploration

Psychosocial Developmental Needs and Transitional Arena

“Erikson’s stages of psychosocial development”¹⁰⁸ is an excellent point to anchor the developmental needs of young leaders. In *Human Development*,¹⁰⁹ the authors paint

¹⁰⁷ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 425.

¹⁰⁸ Donald Capps, *The Decades of Life: A Guide to Human Development* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008), xviii-xx.

¹⁰⁹ Diane E. Papalia, Sally Wendkos Olds, and Ruth Duskin Feldman, *Human Development* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2004).

a chronological portrayal of development through the lifespan, and balance research and real-life applications. In response to the strong family ties of Chinese culture, *Family Therapy*¹¹⁰ provides theoretical frameworks for family therapy, in which an independent emotional and thinking personality can be separated from the root family influences.

In “Psychodynamic Models” and “Transgenerational Models” of *Human Development*, the Brownian model is of particular use in the discussion of self-differentiation of young leaders. Together with all the other models mentioned in these two chapters, they help to put into perspective young leaders’ developmental stage of identity formation, differentiation, intimacy, and stage transition to young adulthood.

In *The Logic of the Spirit*,¹¹¹ Loder incorporates a psychological perspective from Erikson about struggles between identity. Identity is a consistent sense of oneself from one social and cultural environmental context to the next and allows for a balance between objective societal-conformity and subjective self-absorption. Loder mentions five specific areas related to the transition to adulthood: the body axis, ideological axis, authority axis, love axis, and work axis. His view provides a faith developmental framework for spiritual formation to be applied in this discussion.

¹¹⁰ Herbert Goldenberg, and Irene Goldenberg, *Family Therapy: An Overview* (Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning, 2012).

¹¹¹ James E. Loder, “Adolescence in Psychological Perspective: Five Axes of Youth identity,” in *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 203-30.

Spiritual New Identity and Mind Renewal

In facet 5, “Motivated Spirituality,”¹¹² among the seven motivators Boa mentions, identity in Christ is a necessary item to enrich the spiritual dynamic of young leaders. Boa highlights that we used to let our worth be “determined by our accomplishments and [were encouraged] to pursue significance and meaning through the things we do,” instead of being “determined by what Christ do for us and . . . not [be] shaped by what we do.”¹¹³ As Boa reflects, “our performance does not determine our identity; instead, our new identity in Jesus becomes the basis for what we do.”¹¹⁴ Boa provides a view on cause and consequence: “If we perceive ourselves to be worthless or inadequate, this will be manifested in our behavior. But if we choose to acknowledge the truth of Scripture, we will begin to see God and ourselves in a new light.”¹¹⁵ This view gives a response to the spiritual need of the performing leader.

In *After You Believe*,¹¹⁶ Wright sees the orientation of man is not only to glorify God and enjoy him forever but also toward creation, with a telos to make it flourish. Thus, the sanctification process should be in light of the transformational newness and the eschatological future of the gospel of Jesus. Wright focuses on the need to develop Christian character, and he points out that it takes moral effort over time to develop virtue and nurture the spiritual life.

¹¹² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 127-52.

¹¹³ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 144.

¹¹⁴ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 144.

¹¹⁵ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 144.

¹¹⁶ N. T. Wright, *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2010).

Wright echoes Paul's constant exhortations in the New Testament for the Christian to "put on, put off, put away, or put to death."¹¹⁷ Wright sees Paul has the idea that a Christian, saved by grace and given a new identity in Christ, must make repeated, conscious moral decisions to live and develop his or her new identity. To reach the "virtue goal," Wright values the Pauline process of renewal of the mind; in other words, we must change our thinking to reflect the fact that Jesus is the true king, and we must embrace our role in his coming kingdom.

In *Transforming Worldviews*,¹¹⁸ Hiebert gives an important reminder: "conversion to Christ must encompass three levels; behavior, beliefs and the worldview that underlies these."¹¹⁹ Hiebert refers to anthropologist Michael Kearney, who says "a worldview comprises images of Self and of all that is recognized as Not-Self, plus ideas about relationships between them."¹²⁰ And Hiebert highlights a few experiences necessary for young leaders to go through: to acquire an understanding of the Self and the Soul; to relate the Self and Not-Self others; to classify perceived realities to deal with; to explain experiences in terms of causes and effects; to relate space in life (e.g., geographical, personal, sacred, moral, heavens, hells); and to relate time in life (e.g., past, present, future). These reflections are necessary essences for young leaders to go through, in such a way to facilitate a process of spiritual growth.

¹¹⁷ Wright, *After You Believe*, 145-47.

¹¹⁸ Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008).

¹¹⁹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 11.

¹²⁰ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 20.

To Be Fully Alive Is to Contemplate and Be Transformed

In *Let Your Life Speak*,¹²¹ Palmer mentions “life is not only about strengths and virtues, but also about liabilities and limits, trespasses and shadows.”¹²² People often ignore the important quest for wholeness, that embracing life is not just what we are confident and proud of, but also what we disregard or find shameful about ourselves. The goal is transformation of the inner command center of the being, through the purifying and healing of our true self by Christ, in such a way that we can become holy and whole again.

In *Active Life*,¹²³ Palmer describes the “Hidden Wholeness”¹²⁴ that is to be found by entering more fully into the difficult reality in which we reside. Palmer describes contemplation as “any ways that we can unveil the illusions that masquerade as reality and reveal the reality behind the masks.”¹²⁵ Thus, contemplation is often painful, but only by entering deeply into these unpleasant circumstances will we find the truth. And with a better appreciation for the truth, we are capable of being more authentic to ourselves, empowering us to be more truly alive in all aspects of our lives.

¹²¹ Parker J. Palmer, “Leading from Within,” in *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 73-94.

¹²² Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, 6.

¹²³ Parker J. Palmer, *The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999).

¹²⁴ Thomas Merton, “Hagia Sophia,” in *A Thomas Merton Reader*, ed. Thomas P. McDonnell (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1989), 506, quoted in Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, 99.

¹²⁵ Palmer, *The Active Life*, 17.

In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*,¹²⁶ Mulholland describes an important fact about transformation. “Transformation in the spiritual life is not a matter of a few soul surgery repairs or a new coat of rigorous conditioning on the old structure of our lives. If we are to be transformed into Christlikeness, our masked selves must be abandoned, our false identities be forsaken.”¹²⁷ Jesus mandates, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it” (Luke 9:23-24). The false self is consistently engaged in a persistent effort to preserve its self-referenced structure of being. Jesus calls us to deny the pervasive structure of self-referenced being. Peterson in *The Message* translates Luke 9:24 as “Self-help is no help at all and self-sacrifice is the way.” This translation clarifies what it means to deny ourselves. This total loss of the self-referenced-ness is essential before the “life hidden with Christ in God” (Col 3:3) can be truly actualized.

Relational Community for Wholistic Spirituality

A Collective Ethos of Trust and Authenticity

In “Spirituality in Community,”¹²⁸ Glen Scorgie and Kevin Reimer write, “Instructional practices like bible study, catechism, teaching, and preaching all have a

¹²⁶ M. Robert Mulholland Jr., “Spirituality and Transformation,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen Scorgie, Simon Chan, Gordon T. Smith, and James D. Smith III (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 216-21.

¹²⁷ Mulholland, “Spirituality and Transformation,” 219.

¹²⁸ Glen Scorgie and Kevin Reimer, “Spirituality in Community,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen Scorgie, Simon Chan, Gordon T. Smith, and James D. Smith III (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 77-83.

positive influence, but persons are formed even more significantly by the life practices of influential others, and they are profoundly shaped by the collective ethos of their communal environment.”¹²⁹ This insight displays an essential aspect that apart from the transformation processes mentioned above, the essences of the relational community are equally important in facilitating the spiritual formation of young leaders.

In *The Kingdom Life*,¹³⁰ Thrall and McNicol state “the processes of spiritual formation are indispensable to help people to discover and define who we are and how we shall live in trust, love, grace, humility, dignity, and justice.”¹³¹ And the key for entering God’s community of grace is humility, where “humility is trusting God and others with me, which is the most basic of all spiritual disciplines for transformation to be able to get initiated.”¹³² Humility and trust are basic to authentic community.

In *Reaching Out*,¹³³ Nouwen mentions three movements: from loneliness to solitude, from hostility to hospitality, and from illusion to prayer, guiding people to discover themselves as created free. It encourages people “to disarm themselves, to lay aside their occupations and preoccupations, and to listen with attention and care to the voices speaking in their own center.”¹³⁴ Such voices are as a result of solitude

¹²⁹ Scorgie and Reimer, “Overview of Christian Spirituality,” 81.

¹³⁰ Bill Thrall and Bruce McNicol, “Communities of Grace,” in *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 61-84.

¹³¹ Thrall and McNicol, “Communities of Grace,” 61.

¹³² Thrall and McNicol, “Communities of Grace,” 70.

¹³³ Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life* (New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1975).

¹³⁴ Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 76.

and reflections, “telling us about our inner necessity — that is, our vocation.”¹³⁵ Nouwen highlights that, “the development of this inner sensitivity is the beginning of a spiritual life.”¹³⁶

A Spirituality of Gratitude and Otherness-Focused

In *Conformed in His Image* facet 5, “Motivated Spirituality,”¹³⁷ “Love and Gratitude” is specifically important to the relational community. Boa describes gratitude “for what God has done for us in the past [and it] can also motivate us to trust him in the present for what he is going to do in the future.”¹³⁸ However, Boa highlights the usual problem: “We are more inclined to view our lives in terms of what we lack rather than in view of what we have already received. Instead of seeing the fullness of what we have received in Christ, we tend to approach our experiences from a deficiency perspective.”¹³⁹ Boa refers to the Bible, which says “all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28), and as a result, “the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Rom 8:18) Thus, Boa says, “if we develop the habit of recounting the blessings we have received as God’s beloved children, we become more inclined to view the hardships and disappointments we face from a long-term stance.”¹⁴⁰ Building

¹³⁵ Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 40.

¹³⁶ Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 39.

¹³⁷ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 127-52.

¹³⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 137.

¹³⁹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 137.

¹⁴⁰ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 137.

a culture of love and gratitude in the community is essential in helping young leaders to transform their ways of looking at their lives.

In Facet 12, “Corporate Spirituality,”¹⁴¹ Boa covers soul care and counseling. There he mentions an essential dimension of life together in Christ is a one-on-one ministry, and Boa borrows from Bruce Demarest’s *Satisfy Your Soul* and displays a spectrum of personal soul-care ministries that range from informal, unstructured, and reciprocal ministry to formal, structural, and one-directional ministry. Boa gives a brief description of various soul-care relations; spiritual friendship, spiritual guidance, spiritual mentoring, and spiritual direction, which are essential to the setting of the relational community to facilitate the spiritual growth of young leaders.

In facet 1, “Relational Spirituality,”¹⁴² Boa explains the chemical changes between me-God relations and me-other relations. About the me-God relation, Boa explains, “By relat[ing] to God and respond[ing] to his loving initiatives, we will discover who and whose we are as we come to see ourselves as God sees us, a different identity in Christ.”¹⁴³ Consequently, “we are secure enough to become other-centered rather than self-centric, and this enables us to become givers rather than grabbers.”¹⁴⁴ The better we come to know God, the more we will love him. And the more we love him, the greater will be our willingness to trust and obey him in the things he calls us to do. “The more we grow in our understanding of God’s unconditional love and acceptance of us

¹⁴¹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 415-49.

¹⁴² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 27-56.

¹⁴³ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 34.

¹⁴⁴ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 28.

in Christ, we can become secure enough to serve other people without expecting reciprocity, and we are increasingly liberated from using people to meet our needs.”¹⁴⁵ A focus on others should be one of the thematic topics to be covered for the spiritual growth of young leaders.

To Be Fully Alive Is to Reconcile and Be Related

In *Whole Life Transformation*,¹⁴⁶ Meyer describes what nowadays youth are looking for as authentic Christian living. “They are not satisfied with being ‘alone together’ in the highly programmatic and impersonal factories of religious goods and services, they desire doing life together.”¹⁴⁷ Many authentic young believers are not interested in going to church, yet they want to be the church with other followers of Jesus and seekers of God.

Gaultiere believes that “we all go through seasons in our growth and cycle through different stages. The measurement of our maturity is not the stage we most relate to but how we’re doing with loving God with our whole self and loving our neighbor as ourselves.”¹⁴⁸ Christ is restoring intimacy with God as well as with others. This impulse toward reconciliation and restoration moves vertically as well as horizontally and transfigures past and future developmental stories.

¹⁴⁵ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 42.

¹⁴⁶ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*.

¹⁴⁷ Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation*, 92.

¹⁴⁸ Bill Gaultier, “Life in Christ: Questions on Developmental Stages,” Soul Shepherding, accessed August 13, 2016, <http://www.soulshepherding.org/2015/04/life-in-christ-questions-on-developmental-stages/>.

In “Spirituality and Transformation,”¹⁴⁹ Mulholland explains the ways of spiritual formation. “Attachment to God in love is the only sure way to be detached from those things that have formed our false identities which held us in bondage to our self-referenced way of being.”¹⁵⁰ And to go deep, one needs to go back. The uttermost embrace by the grace of God is the only way that one can be truly transfigured from those fortunes that have misshaped our characters and from those carriages that have held us in bondage to our unconscious, repeated pattern of reacting behaviors. Through depending on God in love and through the transfiguring embrace of grace, our lives are increasingly liberated from all the negative values and instincts encoded in our lives.

Vocational Pathfinding for Missional Discipleship

Discipleship Themes in the New Testament

Brown summarizes three themes of New Testament spirituality: Messiah-shaped, eschatological, and marked by the Holy Spirit.¹⁵¹ Brown describes “the New Testament spirituality as God’s covenantal community, reconstituted around and shaped by Messiah Jesus, lives by the Spirit in the inaugural time of God’s restoration.”¹⁵² At the time of the not yet and the already, the church and its disciples, through their participation in the Messiah, keep in step with the Spirit. God works to conform the

¹⁴⁹ Mulholland, “Spirituality and Transformation,” 216-21.

¹⁵⁰ Mulholland, “Spirituality and Transformation,” 220.

¹⁵¹ Jeannine K. Brown, “New Testament Foundations of Christian Spirituality,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen Scorgie, Simon Chan, Gordon T. Smith, and James D. Smith III (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 46-51.

¹⁵² Brown, “New Testament Foundations of Christian Spirituality,” 50.

community of faith into the image of Jesus as they pursue faithful living in worship, service, and mission.

In *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*,¹⁵³ Hays summarizes the theological framework for Pauline thought in the New Testament into three themes: eschatological new creation, the cross, and the new community in Christ. Hays highlights that “Paul seeks to demonstrate his teachings are rooted in his theological thought, but theology is for Paul never merely a speculative exercise; instead, it is always a tool for constructing community.”¹⁵⁴ Everything is brought under the scrutiny of the gospel, and the attempt is made to speak to all pastoral problems in light of the gospel.

Hays highlights Matthew’s portrait of Jesus as the spiritual teacher who supplants all other rabbis, expanding the Torah in a new and authoritative way.¹⁵⁵ (See Matt 23:8) Writing about the theme of the new community, Hays points out that while the Gospel of Matthew is addressed to a Jewish-Christian community, the emphases of Matthew are the transition of a unifying community ethos in Christ, intentionally missional focus for those who are serious in testifying for the Lord. Regarding the theme of the cross, the counterintuitive paradoxes of the Beatitudes in Matthew alert us to the fact that it is an alternative process of spiritual formation, out of sync with the usual order of the world. Converted lives anticipate the ultimate restoration of God in the image of Jesus. As for the theme of the new creation, Matthew chooses to spiritualize kingdom living using a hermeneutic of love and mercy. Such model of

¹⁵³ Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation, A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1996), 16-59.

¹⁵⁴ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 18.

¹⁵⁵ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 93-111.

living reflects the mercifulness of Christ being an alternative creation that is counter to the social culture.

A Discipleship Framework in Matthew's Beatitudes

In *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*,¹⁵⁶ Lloyd-Jones provides a precise exegesis and hermeneutic of the Beatitudes. Lloyd-Jones wants to display the general account of the Christian which is given in the Beatitudes, and how substantially different a Christian is from a non-Christian. The vital questions Lloyd-Jones wants Christian to examine is, Do we belong to this kingdom? Are we ruled by Christ? Is he our King and our Lord? Are we manifesting these qualities in our daily lives? Do we see this is what we are meant to be?

In "The Message of the Sermon on the Mount,"¹⁵⁷ Stott writes that the Beatitudes paint a comprehensive portrait of a Christian disciple. Stott portrays an inward transformational journey in the Beatitudes:

We see him first alone on his knees before God, acknowledging his spiritual poverty and mourning over it. This makes him meek or gentle in all his relationships since honesty compels him to allow others to think of him what before God he confesses himself to be. Yet he is far from acquiescing in his sinfulness, for he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, longing to grow in grace and in goodness.¹⁵⁸

And Stott portrays another outward missional journey in the Beatitudes:

We see him next with others, out in the human community. His relationship with God does not cause him to withdraw from society, nor is he insulated from the world's pain. On the contrary, he is in the thick of it, showing mercy to

¹⁵⁶ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* (Eastford, CT: Martino Publishing, 2011), 32-137.

¹⁵⁷ John Stott, "The Message of the Sermon on the Mount — Christian Counter-Culture," in *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 30-56.

¹⁵⁸ Stott, "Message of the Sermon on the Mount," 54.

those battered by adversity and sin. He is transparently sincere in all his dealings and seeks to play a constructive role as a peacemaker. Yet he is insulted and persecuted on account of the righteousness for which he stands and the Christ with whom he is identified.¹⁵⁹

Stott highlights in all this the values and standards of Jesus, which are in direct conflict with the commonly accepted values and standards of the world. Such a reversal of human values is fundamental to missional discipleship.

In *The Logic of the Spirit*,¹⁶⁰ Loder re-envisioning human development with spiritual life development using four stages of transformation: awakening, purging, illumination, and moving toward unification.¹⁶¹ The context is different from practical human concerns and shifts to what God is doing in human lives and human history. The importance of the past, causality, and proof are subordinated and transformed according to the meanings and purposes of God's Spirit. This re-envisioning of Loder is different from traditional Christian practices (conversion, sanctification, glorification) and is refined with psychosocial developmental language and contemporary theological perspectives. Loder helps to articulate the happenings within the human spirit and lays out the stages of spiritual formation in Matthew's Beatitudes, as well as for a missional discipleship framework.

To Be Fully Alive Is to Act and Be Missional

In *The Active Life*,¹⁶² Palmer sees both the contemplation life, as well as the active life, are needed. The contemplation life is a "ceaseless drive to be fully alive,"

¹⁵⁹ Stott, "Message of the Sermon on the Mount," 54.

¹⁶⁰ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 46-80.

¹⁶¹ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 65-59.

¹⁶² Palmer, *The Active Life*.

and the active life is “any way that we can co-create reality with other beings and with the Spirit.”¹⁶³

Although Palmer is talking about the wisdom of the marketplace, there is a strong message that spiritual life does not mean abandoning the world. Instead, Palmer is suggesting a deep engagement through life-giving action. And Palmer shares positively about light and darkness in life: “The deepest things in life come not singly but in paradoxical pairs, where the light and the dark intermingle.”¹⁶⁴ When we contemplate the revealed problems as well as the potential of our life, we can come to learn much about ourselves, the world, and God.

In “Spirituality and Transformation,”¹⁶⁵ Mulholland reminds us, “Genuine spirituality and transformation unite our relationship with God and our relationships with others in a symbiotic reality.”¹⁶⁶ Thus, Christian identity matures not through navel gazing but through engagement with God’s larger interest in the reconciliation and healing of a wounded humanity. Transformation is for the sake of the world.

Spiritual Life Development to Consider

Ministry Focus

In *Four Views of Youth Ministry and the Church*,¹⁶⁷ Mark Senter mentions four different approaches for youth ministry: the “Inclusive” seeks to integrate youth to

¹⁶³ Palmer, *The Active Life*, 17.

¹⁶⁴ Palmer, *The Active Life*, 104.

¹⁶⁵ Mulholland, “Spirituality and Transformation,” 216-21.

¹⁶⁶ Mulholland, “Spirituality and Transformation,” 220.

¹⁶⁷ Wesley Black, Chap Clark, Malan Nel, and Mark H. Senter, *Four Views of Youth Ministry and the Church: Inclusive Congregational, Preparatory, Missional, Strategic*, ed. Mark H. Senter (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

the church; the “Preparatory” sees youth ministry as preparing disciples in training; the “Missional” focuses on evangelism; and the “Strategic” sees youth ministry as a church-planting strategy. The direction of these four views is taken from church development and church planting; and as a result, these approaches respond to the functional development of the institutional organization, where the church remains subject of concern rather than the youth.

In *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century*,¹⁶⁸ Chap Clark provides five views of youth ministry: the “Gospel Advancing” sees the development of youth as the world transformer for Christ; the “Reformed” sees God as the focal point by means of the grace working in and through youth; the “Adoption” sees eventually youth is being “adopted” into the larger body of Christ; the “Ecclesial” holds that youth should experience their faith with the backdrop of what has taken place throughout the church history; and “Deuteronomy 6” sees youth ministry in partnership with family and church to nurture the youth. The approach of these five views responds to the cultural and societal stereotype and aims to provide theological, biblical, psychosocial, and ecological grounds in considering youth ministry. At the end, it illustrates how difficult it is in youth ministry to reach a shared understanding in response to all the diverse contextual situations. These approaches put youth as the main subject; however, the priority of concern remains on the renewal and continuous development of the ministry.

¹⁶⁸ Fernando Arzola, Brian Cosby, Ron Hunter, Greg Stier, and Chap Clark, *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century: Five Views*, ed. Chap Clark (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015).

In “Three Theological Foundations Shaping 21st Century Youth Ministry Strategy,”¹⁶⁹ Jeremy Zach tries to step back and look for the necessary theological foundations influencing youth ministry, and he suggests three: spiritual formation (Gal 5), family ministry (Deut 6; Prov 1:8-9), and missiology (Matt 28:19-20). In this respect, spiritual formation in youth ministry is all about developing the “whole” youth, which happens as and when biblical knowledge is interwoven with experience, and encountering the Holy Spirit is revealed in the experience. It challenges a more wholistic approach in looking at anthropology theologically, not just from an idealistic theological perspective. Family ministry is a call to get the family and community involved in the life of a youth, where shepherding is not solely structured around the youth fellowship but also at home or in groups with adult involvement. It calls for a review in ecclesiology: we should look at church as a whole instead of a departmental ministry zone. Missiology is a response to many youth nowadays who desire to do Jesus’ style of ministry, to become missionaries across the world and across the street. It is asking for a new paradigm for missional discipleship, as the world is advancing into a global village and the new generation is walking their faith in more diverse ways of creative imagination. Zach’s suggestion has put youth in the center of focus, calling for a renewal in theological anthropology, cross-generational ecclesiology, and creative missiology.

¹⁶⁹ Jeremy Zach, “Three Theological Foundations Shaping 21st Century Youth Ministry Strategy,” ChurchLeaders, accessed November 5, 2016, http://www.churchleaders.com/youth/youth-leaders-blogs/151929-jeremy_zach_3_theological_foundations_shaping_21st_century_youth_ministry_strategy.html.

An Integrated Life Connecting Faith and Living

Loder points out that theology which is the language to describe what is a conviction is sometimes too subjective and preoccupied with rigorous demands for theological thinking.¹⁷⁰ In the end, theology has not been able to supply the understanding, comprehension, and an adequate language for what takes place during the convicting moments of transformations. The main focus of spiritual formation is not about the affirmation of Christ as Lord but the coming to know God in our life.

In “Spiritual Theology,” Chan points out that “doctrines are formulations derived from the church experience of God . . . spiritual theology focus[es] on the experiential reality underlying the concepts of systematic theology”¹⁷¹. Thus, the discussion needs to consider the experiential reality of young leaders, particularly the history of their developmental life and faith integration. And Chan mentions spiritual theology should be based on the Trinity, which “presupposes an indirect working of grace through created things . . . [is marked] by a warm and intimate relationship with Christ . . . opens to the direct workings of the Spirit coming from beyond history.”¹⁷² Therefore, the experiential reality should cover the embracing grace of God, the intimate and authentic relationship with Christ, and the individual spiritual experience in the Spirit.

Chan mentions that there are two main focuses in spiritual theology; it “traces the process of spiritual life from beginning to its final perfection, and second, it studies

¹⁷⁰ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 9-34.

¹⁷¹ Simon Chan, “Spiritual Theology,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen Scorgie, Simon Chan, Gordon T. Smith, and James D. Smith III (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 52.

¹⁷² Chan, “Spiritual Theology,” 53.

various means needed for progress to be realized.”¹⁷³ About the process, he writes, “traditionally it comes from Scripture and the Christian tradition, nowadays there is an increasing use of the social sciences and the field of developmental psychology.”¹⁷⁴ This view implies the discussion would require quite a bit of psychosocial language to describe how the logic of the human spirit is going through the transforming moment. And of the means, he says, it involves “the mortification of sin and growth in virtue, . . . and [is] not complete without considering the problems that hinder progress.”¹⁷⁵ This insight indicates that the discussion needs to talk about hindrances to spiritual formation, such as shadows of repeated patterns and wounds from past hurts, and not just focus on specific vices and virtues.

In facet 8, “Process Spirituality,”¹⁷⁶ Boa writes, “We have a natural tendency to invest our energies in goals and accomplishment hoping to achieve in the days ahead, the problem is even if we are able to attain these ends, we are already thinking of the next one.”¹⁷⁷ We rarely look to our pasts, alive as we are to the realities of the present, nor are we able to hold on for our future. Boa’s emphasis is on human beings rather than human doings. “The Process of Life is not conformity to prevailing standards of holiness but a step-by-step process, the process of making genuine choices and respond[ing] to what God is doing in our lives. The dynamics of growth are then

¹⁷³ Chan, “Spiritual Theology,” 52.

¹⁷⁴ Chan, “Spiritual Theology,” 54.

¹⁷⁵ Chan, “Spiritual Theology,” 55-56.

¹⁷⁶ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 255-90.

¹⁷⁷ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 256.

inside out rather than outside in.”¹⁷⁸ As a human being, one needs to be faithful to the “Process of Life,” which focused on abiding in Christ and practicing his presence.

In facet 7, “Holistic Spirituality,”¹⁷⁹ Boa mentions “there is a general tendency to compartmentalize Christianity with another component in life, fostering a dichotomy between the secular and the spiritual.”¹⁸⁰ In his view, “an integrated life requires a connection between faith and living,”¹⁸¹ which implies “a necessary to develop spiritual discernment and awareness in all things,”¹⁸² and “keep the focus of life rooted in the love of Christ.”¹⁸³ Integration, discernment, awareness, and keeping life focus are the fundamental essences young leaders have to acquire to keep their spiritual life healthy.

Four Quadrants of Life Review

In the conclusion to *Not One Less*,¹⁸⁴ Choi lists a possible blueprint for a “spiritual life development” model for young leaders. The blueprint is a summary of the framework in response to ten youth cases listed in the book; all the persons are at various developmental crises. This model contains a life review process in four quadrants, shadow, wounds, grace, and vocation, to facilitate the integration of spiritual life development.

¹⁷⁸ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 257-58.

¹⁷⁹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 201-54.

¹⁸⁰ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 214.

¹⁸¹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 213.

¹⁸² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 215.

¹⁸³ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 217.

¹⁸⁴ Choi, *Not One Less*, 206-16.

Shadow to Contemplate

In *Logic of the Spirit*,¹⁸⁵ Loder gives a precise description of intimacy and love. Loder mentions “what is at stake in young adulthood is the willingness to risk fusion of one’s own identity with another, whether to be absorbed or be the absorber.”¹⁸⁶ Loder explains the psychological tension of intimacy: “being the innermost character of a person, where one may feel most secure, is also where one may be most intimidated.”¹⁸⁷ Loder goes on to describe intimacy in a theological perspective. “The most powerful intimacy comes from the presence of the Spirit of God. This satisfaction occurs at a level deeper than the psychological intimacy, the innermost being of the person. At that very point, one discovers it is the spiritual presence of Christ that knows better than I do what it is for me to be me.”¹⁸⁸ Such a view provides a description of spiritual formation for Ps139, in psychodevelopmental language. It helps us to understand the runaway and repeating pattern during the discussion of Shadow in the framework.

Wounds to Forget

In facet 1, “Relational Spirituality,”¹⁸⁹ Boa talks about wounds and hurts that “come from the influence of significant others, and [such pain] creates ripple effects that continue to touch our lives long after these people are gone.”¹⁹⁰ Boa continues to explain that “to forgive others is to release them from any obligation to make up to

¹⁸⁵ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 251-80.

¹⁸⁶ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 253.

¹⁸⁷ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 254.

¹⁸⁸ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 265.

¹⁸⁹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 27-56.

¹⁹⁰ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 52.

you what they have taken from you.”¹⁹¹ Boa adds that “through the grace of divine forgiveness, the alienation can then be overcome, and a loving, secure relationship as true members of God’s family can be inaugurated.”¹⁹² Such insights help to provide the being sinned-against perspective theologically during the discussion of Wounds in the framework.

Grace to Remember

In *Logic of the Spirit*,¹⁹³ Loder gives a theological description of time: “the Divine Spirit penetrates the whole person, the totality of the lifespan from birth to death is brought under the power and purposes of God.” And Loder describes it as the “fullness of time,” which he explains as “the present embraces both the past, which is re-envisioned in the light of the Divine Presence, and the future, which has come into the present as a prolepsis of what is yet to be.”¹⁹⁴ This description corresponds to the segmented life of young leaders where their past, future, and present are disconnected. Loder tries to reconnect the fragments of the timeline in life, in which “all time is gathered into a single comprehensive vision of one’s place in creation, the fullness of time in a comprehensive present that takes up and transfigures all that went before and what is yet to come.”¹⁹⁵ This view helps to provide the theological foundation when looking at Grace during the review of time in the framework of spiritual life development.

¹⁹¹ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 50.

¹⁹² Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 49.

¹⁹³ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 231-50.

¹⁹⁴ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 232.

¹⁹⁵ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 233.

Vocation to Act

In *Let Your Life Speak*,¹⁹⁶ Palmer invites us to listen to the inner voice and follow its leadings toward a sense of meaning and purpose. Palmer highlights that insight for life can be gained from darkness and depression, even more than it is through fulfillment and joy; moreover, it can help to illuminate an indicative reflection toward the true calling one wishes to seek for one's life. Palmer reveals that there is an important co-relationship between authentic self, authentic community, and authentic living. His view helps to provide various perspectives during the discussion of Vocation in the framework, instead of a self-focused fulfillment.

Summary of the Literature Review

To understand the ministry needs (identity exploration, wholistic spirituality, and missional discipleship) as related to the contextual situation of young leaders, the literature review covers the perspectives from global phenomena to ethnic considerations, and specifically the local contexts young leaders face in Hong Kong. To capture the realities of spiritual formation (transformational, relational, and vocational) that need to be considered as fundamental, the review covers evangelical perspectives, from viewpoints about psychosocial faith integration to typological considerations of different young leaders.

To focus on the vital essences of spiritual formation specifically for young leaders, transformational growth for identity exploration, relational community for wholistic spirituality, and vocational pathfinding for missional discipleship are taken

¹⁹⁶ Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*.

as the focal points of the literature review, as well as a complementary review of the appropriate ministry approach of spiritual life development in this context. To relate the discussion and literature review to actual application, chapter 4 of the thesis-project will establish a process of spiritual life development for young leaders based on a biblical framework and design an intentional application with measurable parameters in understanding the effect on spiritual growth on young leaders.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT DESIGN

Reimagining the Process of Spiritual Formation

Loder emphasizes, “Theology, which should be the language of conviction, is sometimes too subjective for those preoccupied with rigorous demands for theological thinking.”¹ For instance, if one focuses on the spiritual presence of Jesus as Christ, the experience itself with Jesus will easily be of lesser concern. Theology has not been able to supply understanding, comprehension, and an adequate language for what occurs during the convicting moments of transformation. Niebuhr explains, “God’s self-disclosure is that permanent revolution in our religious life by which all religious truths are painfully transformed and all religious behavior[s] [are] transfigured by repentance and new faith.”² It is not about the affirmation of Christ as Lord but the coming to know God in our life.

The essences of spiritual formation in response to spiritual needs and ministry gaps have been restated in the preceding chapter. What is now required is to reimagine a framework for spiritual life development and to reinitiate a spiritual journey for the purpose. A journey touches not just the superficial issues but also the underlying spiritual urges as interceded by the groaning of the Spirit. This journey helps young leaders to go deep in understanding their past disturbance, present

¹ James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment: Understanding Convictional Experiences*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers & Howard, 1989), 18.

² Richard H. Niebuhr, *The Meaning of Revelation* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1941), 133, quoted in Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 19.

situation, and future possibilities as narrated by the creator God. This journey helps to find meaning, identity, and worthiness in life as located in Christ our Savior.

The Biblical Framework

The Spiritual Formation Journey in Psalm 139

All Christian traditions recognize spiritual life must undergo a developmental process, but how it advances is understood differently. “The resources for understanding spiritual progression have traditionally come from the Scripture and the church, but nowadays increasing use is made of the social sciences, especially in the field of developmental psychology,”³ which contributes a wider understanding in faith development. The works of Lawrence Kohlberg and James Loder reflect such an interpretation from the point of view of the human spirit with many theo-anthropological reflections.⁴

Loder provides a substantive theoretical description that incorporates identity development and spiritual formation. In contrast to Erikson, who roots his theory in the psychosocial, Loder argues for a spiritual foundation that believes the human spirit is in the process of actively pursuing and discovering its identity concerning who one is, in the “face of God” concerning who God is. Gushiken describes it, saying,

³ Simon Chan, “Spiritual Theology,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie and Simon Chan (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 54.

⁴ Lawrence Kohlberg, *Psychology of Moral Development* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1984); James E. Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998).

“Loder integrates psychological insights and theological foundations to present a more holistic approach.”⁵

As Christians understand, sin is not so much breaking the rules or committing immoral deeds, but as Anderson emphasizes, “It is the separation from God, from others, and from one’s deepest self.”⁶ The study of spiritual life development is not completed without considering the problems that hinder, such as distractions, temptations, struggles, and shame. The Psalms are dominated by the voice of humanity expressing concerns to a listening God from a variety of life settings, and the point of transformation is described by R. J. Tourney as “seeing and hearing God with the Psalms.”⁷ The voice of God breaks into the Psalter and encourages a dialogic spirituality with the voices and struggles of the human spirit.

Psalm 139 describes a journey of spiritual formation (see figure 4.1) very close to what is being explored in this thesis-project. As Walter Brueggemann states, “It gives voice to a breadth of human expression”⁸ and portrays a serial path of transformation. Psalm 139 begins with the orientation statement that “God knows with an intimacy too overwhelming.” At first, a person is disorientated, with an “escape in fear and negate to isolate;” but then is reorientated by the “embracing grace with a redefined reality.” The result is a new orientation toward one’s “vocational journey and a transformed ego.” (See Ps 139:1-6; Ps 139:7-12; Ps 139:13-18; Ps 139:19-24)

⁵ Kevin M. Gushiken, “Nurturing Spiritual Identity Formation in Youth Curriculum from the Theological-Psychological Approach of James Loder,” *Christian Education Journal* series 3, vol. 7, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 323.

⁶ Bernhard W. Anderson, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 77.

⁷ Raymond Jacque Tournay, *Seeing and Hearing God with the Psalms: The Prophetic Liturgy of the Second Temple in Jerusalem*, trans. J. Edward Crowley (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1991), 311.

⁸ Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1984).

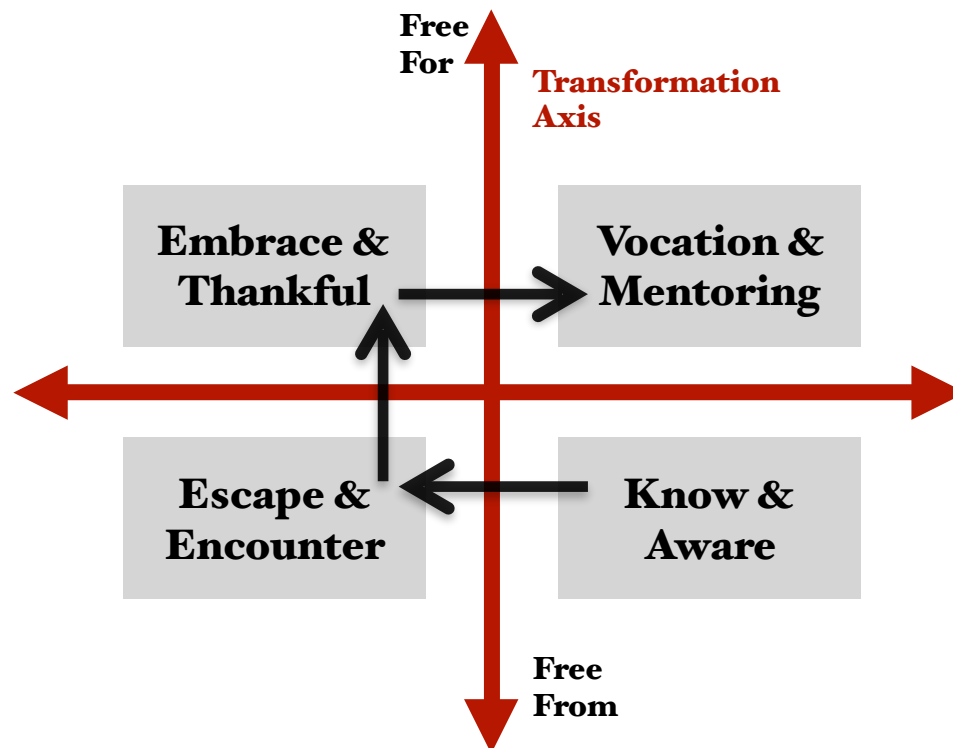


Figure 4.1. Spiritual Formation Journey of Psalm 139

God Knows with an Intimacy Too Overwhelming

O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. (vv. 1-6)

God is all-knowing. Is this knowledge a therapeutic embracement or an overwhelming intrusion? According to Erikson, “In the wake of the adolescent emphasis upon identity formation, the young adult, emerging from the search for and insistence on identity, is eager and willing to fuse their identity with that of others.”⁹ What is at stake for young leaders during their identity exploration is the willingness to risk

⁹ Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York, NY: Norton, 1994), 255.

fusion of one's own identity with another. It is the risk of being absorbed into other's world or being the absorber. Loder gives a further explanation: "The threat is loss of self-worth acquired in identity. This means that in any real encounter with another person, it comes along a possible threat of depression and an urge toward isolation."¹⁰

Loder refers to theologian Thomas Oden in *Game-Free: The Meaning of Intimacy*, which talks deeply about intimacy. The word *intimacy* (from Latin *intimus*) means inner or innermost. Oden says, "The etymology may link intimacy to intimidation through the Latin root of 'timor,' which means fear."¹¹ Loder takes this idea further, describing the possible tension between intimacy and separation. "If one senses the innermost character of a person, then one knows the core or center of that person: What it means for me to be me. Then, where one may feel most secure, it is also where one may be most intimidated."¹² This insight explains why there is a move toward isolation, in light of the deep ambivalence one may have about the intrusion into one's innermost self.

Such flight from being known and knowable in Ps 139 is also reflected in other biblical narratives. Job was so overwhelmed by God's inescapability that he complained that God hemmed him in and would not leave him alone long enough to catch his breath. (See Job 7:17-19) The intimacy encountered in God's holiness may urge people toward isolation. Young leaders are at their transitional stage to young adulthood, with intimacy and love being their developmental task. It is possible to find numerous cases of runaways related to this situation.

¹⁰ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 253.

¹¹ Thomas Oden, *Game-Free: The Meaning of Intimacy* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1974).

¹² Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 254.

Escape in Fear and Negate to Isolate

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,” even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you. (vv. 7-12)

Loder explains that since the early developmental stage, the emerging child has been using “negation” to confirm its existence, saying, “As long as the ego is the center of the personality, the underlying ‘No’ that enters the personality in the first year of life will create ambivalence and defense against the quality of love.”¹³ Loder is referring to Kierkegaard’s commentary on 1 Corinthians 13.7, “Love believes everything and yet is never deceived,”¹⁴ which implies that human love often is deceiving. The human heart wishes to guard against every form of betrayal, only then to see mistrust. In the end, no love expressed can be received, and the person will dive into the abyss.

The very nature of the process of spiritual growth entails periods of a “dark night,” as mentioned by Saint John of the Cross in the *Dark Night of the Soul*.¹⁵ Repeated downward-drilling patterns in the trails of the personality draw the shadows into long nights of darkness. The longer the period of negation, the deeper the old self is entangled in the personality, and the more distinct the isolation. The devastating

¹³ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 252.

¹⁴ Soren Kierkegaard, *The Works of Love*, trans. David F. Swenson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1946), 221. “Love believes everything — and yet is never deceived. Amazing! To believe nothing in order never to be deceived — this seems to make sense. For how would a man ever be able to deceive someone who believes nothing! But to believe everything and thereby, as it were, to throw oneself away, fair game for all deception and all deceivers, and yet precisely in this way to assure oneself infinitely against every deception: this is remarkable.”

¹⁵ Allison E. Peers, “Dark Night of the Soul by Saint John of the Cross,” Christian Classic Ethereal Library, accessed August 3, 2016, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/john_cross/dark_night.i.html.

repeated patterns of thinking, feeling, doing will continue until they become rotten, and only then the negation and denial will reveal their incompetence. Surprisingly, it can be the moment when the old self is reengaged spiritually at a level much deeper and more intimate than ever before.

Embracing Grace with a Redefined Reality

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you. (vv. 13-18)

The self is known completely by God, who formed the person in the mother's womb. Here, there is a rare reflection on the mysterious development of the embryo in the womb into a person enrolled in a covenantal relationship with God. The most powerful intimacy comes from the presence of the Spirit of God, and this intimacy appears far before the development of the ego. Loder describes this amazing moment: "At the very point where I know what it is for me to be me, and discover it is the spiritual presence of Christ that knows better than I do, this realization produces the potential for freedom and life transformation."¹⁶ This satisfaction occurs at a deep level, not solely the psychological intimus, but the innermost being of the person, where the creator of that person knows him in all respects. For the usual ego which may fall

¹⁶ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 265.

into the comprehension as a deceiving betrayal, such profound heartfelt of intimacy is far beyond the ego can fathom.

Anderson describes it, saying, “It expresses the existential awareness that because God is ‘my God’ — in personal relationship — God sees and knows everything about my life.”¹⁷ Loder gives a description on how transformation will come about: “Such an embracing grace redefines reality, and it has this power because it is the presence of the eternal life of God in the heart of the believer.”¹⁸ In and through the believer’s repeated choice to submerge in such an embracing grace, it will create a reality for the believer to build an attitude to believe and give thanks for all things.

Vocational Journey and a Transformed Ego

Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me! They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain. Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! (vv. 19-14)

The enemies mentioned here are not explicitly identified as persecutors of the psalmist; rather, they are those who are hostile to God and who evoke God’s judgment. In verses 19-22, the psalmist seems to reflect the situation of one who is being unjustly accused of a false way of life and who appears before God for justification. Confident of God’s fairness and embraced by his mercy, the psalmist has an inside out change of attitude and motivation. Anderson points out that “the way everlasting” should be

¹⁷ Anderson, *Out of the Depths*, 94.

¹⁸ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 251.

translated as “the ancient way or the ancient paths,”¹⁹ as he refers to Jeremiah, “Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.” (Jer 6:16) The psalmist no longer rejects the intimate guidance of his Creator.

The psalmist expresses a choice of responding in love, which Loder describes as a “transformed ego” as he refers to his understanding of the kind of love Kierkegaard speaks of: “It is the love that returns good for evil, loves the enemy and does not seek vengeance but forgives even before forgiveness is asked.”²⁰ This response is based on God’s acts of love, calling, and holiness such that the response is engaged with internal affection as well as external behavior. Boda describes this state of reality: “At the center is the passionate pursuit of a person or people who would love Him with all their heart, soul, and might, and making a commitment to pursue one’s life in following Him.”²¹ This kind of spirituality comes to be expressed as a “covenantal response.”²²

The Moment of Transformation in Psalm 139

Loder describes transformation is a knowing event that deepens the conviction such that the very nature of one’s being is changed by such an encounter. The whole matter of such a convictional knowing is connected to fourfold of dimensions: the knower to transform (self), the environmental context of transformation (world), the

¹⁹ Anderson, *Out of the Depths*, 96.

²⁰ Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 252.

²¹ Mark J. Boda, “Old Testament Foundations of Christian Spirituality,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie and Simon Chan (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 36.

²² Boda, “Old Testament Foundations,” 42.

possibility of not being (void), and the possibility of advancing to a new being (holy).²³ And “self,” the knower to transform, is described in three aspects. First is the self-reflection aspect, which is the “thinking about thinking,” concerning the “interaction between the mind and the brain . . . [in] knowing what is human.” Second is the self-relatedness aspect, which is an “encountering of another self-reflecting person,” whose presence may take one into a wider scope of “unpacking oneself.” Third is the self-as-spirit aspect, in becoming “truly itself” which is the “ongoing act of giving love . . . letting the being of others flourish . . . grounded in the [divine] power that posits [the self.]”²⁴ The ultimate transformation is the process of these patterned convictional knowing by which “the Holy Spirit transforms all transformations of the human spirit [into a new being] . . . initiated, mediated, and concluded by Christ.”²⁵

Psalm 139 shows that the “self” is afraid of a transparent relatedness with the divine in becoming “holy,” the possibility of a new being, because the release of one’s self-contained existence seems to be a surrender to external forces of containment. Thus, the “self” runs away such that it can be out of the dreadful condition of being related to another. As Loder states, “It may fall into false grounds for securing itself, paradoxically attempting to establish its integrity of openness by locking it into its own universal systems.”²⁶ It is in the shadow embodiment of its own world of comforting values and worldview.

²³ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 69-71.

²⁴ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 77-79.

²⁵ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 93.

²⁶ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 79.

Such fear is responded to by an isolating negation, the rejection in response to the possibility of a new being, and the separation from the Source of life, allowing one to be submerged in the “void,” the possibility of not being as according to the “holy.” The empty self, in its separateness from its Source, will constantly drive achievers to higher achievement, or wounded runners to denser clouds of hiding, which will eventually collapse into an abyss of loneliness, anxiety, and despair.

The turning point of Ps 139 is the very presence of the Source of life as it comes to be manifested and encountered in one’s “void.” With the total embracement of love and the intimate encountering of grace, the “self” comes to realize its life has long been founded in the state of mind of the Source to let flourish. Loder gives a description for such a convictional transformation: “Christian conviction claims that Jesus Christ has plunged into the abyss and filled it with his nature, and His spiritual presence has transformed the cross and void . . . the transparent relationship between Christ’s nature and ours is the vital nerve.”²⁷ In other words, the truth of Christ’s revelation transforms the subject from “a knower into one who is fully known.”²⁸

This is what Kierkegaard describes as the “transformed self,”²⁹ and the ongoing momentum as demonstrated by the Psalter, “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” (Ps 139:23-24) And this is what Loder sees, saying, “The self cannot be itself unless it is spontaneously replicating and expressing that Source

²⁷ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 120-21.

²⁸ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 121.

²⁹ Anna Strolls Soderquist, “Receptivity,” in *Kierkegaard on Dialogical Education: Vulnerable Freedom* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), 80.

by ‘letting be’ in all its ‘worlds.’”³⁰ The key essence of such spiritual formation is the intimacy of the “self” with its Source. This is an ongoing spiritual communion in which such convictional events of transformation and spiritual experiences call upon young leaders, not only once, but again and again throughout their lives. The journey of one’s calling in response to the Source of life begins.

The Spiritual Life Development Framework

Overview of the Framework

Loder describes a “Transformation Logic,” the transformation of conviction as the knower goes through the “knowing events,” which consist of a total of five steps. First is the “apparent rupture in the knowing context [that appears as] conflict [that] initiates the [response to] know”; second is the “interlude for scanning . . . [the] psychological process of searching out the possible solutions”; third is the “act of insight, intuition, or vision [which] appears on the border between the conscious and unconscious”; fourth is the “opening of the knower to oneself and the contextual situation”; and finally is the “interpretation of the imaginative solution of the original context.”³¹ Loder writes:

It begins when there is an apparent rupture in the knowing context. Conflict initiates the knowing response, and the more one cares about the conflict, the more powerful will be the knowing event. . . . A knowing event is of far greater personal significance if the initial conflict is not artificially generated from the outside, but a conflict that the knower had had all along but not recognized.³²

³⁰ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 80.

³¹ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 37-40.

³² Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 37.

During personal growth, a person would experience times of sinful indulgent, moments of being sinned against, or unexpected strikes in life resulting in marks of indelible wounds. Nonetheless, apart from experiencing these wounds, he can also experience the embracing grace of God. Wounds not yet fully healed will leave scars, and these scars can overshadow the present me as-is or the future me to-be. Every person has his own shadows, representing his own sins, his unhealed wounds, his hidden distress, doubts, fears, and resentments. Each will have his own protective mechanisms, but the most common of all is an unconscious and reflexed running away in denial.

The turning point of Loder's "Transforming Logic" resides in the third step: "The 'construction of insight' sensed with convincing force, that constitutes the turning point of the knowing event. It is by this central act that the elements of the ruptured situation are transformed, and a new perception, perspective, or world view is bestowed on the knowers."³³ It is a vision that appears on the border between the conscious and unconscious, what seems to be convincingly known and yet unknown, conveying with surprising suddenness the becoming of a new consciousness and meaningful reality.

Psalm 139 reflects such a transformational journey: first, running away from one's wounds and shadows; second, reflecting upon one's life; third, conceiving the grace one has had in life; fourth, making a different choice of path; which, fifth, and eventually, leads to Loder's final step of interpretation. Loder explains this final step of interpretation works in two directions: "Both backward and forward. . . . Working backward . . . congruent connections from the essential structures of the imaginative construct

³³ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 38.

back into the original conditions of the puzzle. . . . Working forward . . . makes the apparent congruence public . . . correspondence to a consensual view of the world.”³⁴

In grace, one can discover the divine presence, which is there in our life all along. A timeline is used to help young leaders to review their own pathway of development, including moments of success and failure, peak experiences and valley shadows, times of suffering pain and embracing joy, cloudy dark hours and sparkling bright futures. Past and future; backward and forward re-interpretation, are bounded together. They are not irrelevant segments independent of one another; rather, they come together allowing the present to display a purpose and meaning under the light of God and his narration.

In grace, one can discover his gifts and how wonderfully he is created and called to be. It should not be too surprising that deep within a person’s wounds and shadows, one may find his vocation and passion of life. Everyone is a “wounded healer.”³⁵ Wounds need to be healed, and after that the new heart becomes sensitive to and passionate for those in the midst of similar experiences. The shadows that display a person’s liabilities and trespasses, which keep him from progressing well in the pathway of life, are actually a reflection of potential vocation. These pictures of life — Shadow, Wounds, Grace, and Vocation — are all connected and interwoven together to become a framework of spiritual life development.

The Spiritual Life Development (SLD) framework (see figure 4.2) is based on the biblical structure of the spiritual journey in Ps 139, first mentioned by Philemon

³⁴ Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 39.

³⁵ Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1979), xvi. “Thus nothing can be written about ministry without a deeper understanding of the ways in which the minister can make his own wounds available as a source of healing.”

Choi during his summarizing responses to ten varieties of Hong Kong youth.³⁶ The horizontal line is the Life Timeline, connecting the past to the future. The vertical line is the Transformation Axis, from free-from to free-for, representing the process of spiritual formation. One is freed from the bondages of Wounds and Shadows that prevent life from advancing into the maturity of Christ and God's mission. To be freed for is to experience embracing Grace, recalling all the rainbows which have long been present in life and gradually reengaging the journey toward the Vocation God has called one to. These four quadrants form the basic Life Revision present in this model.

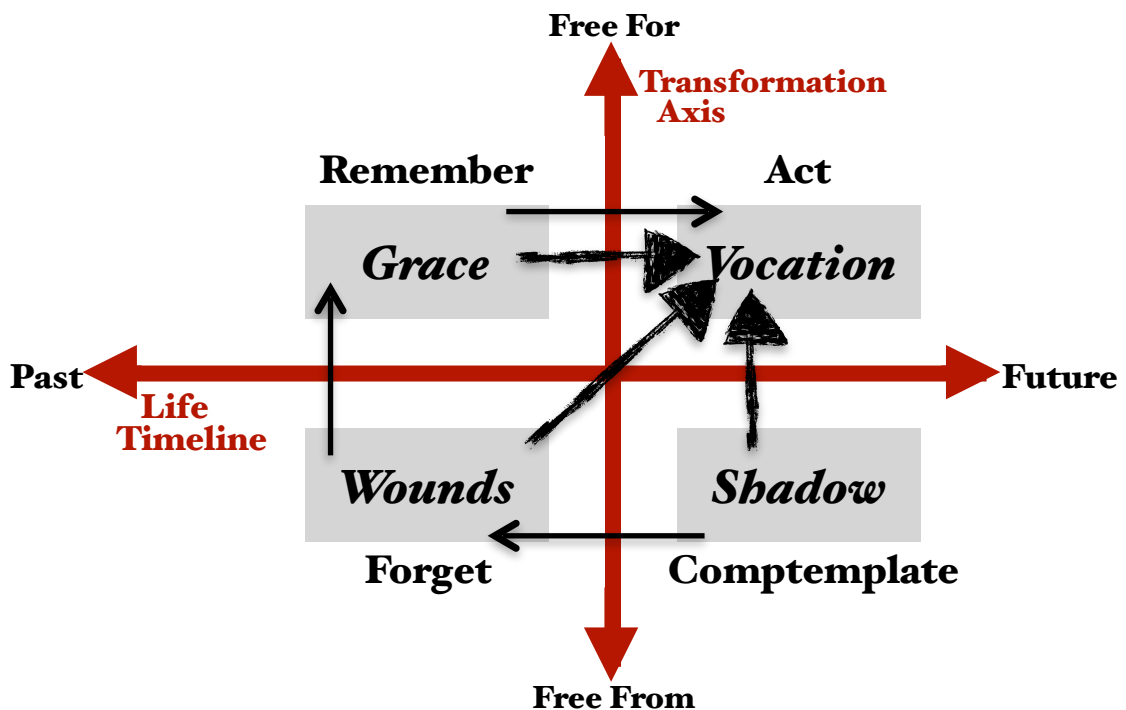


Figure 4.2. Spiritual Life Development Framework

³⁶ Philemon Choi, *Not One Less: Rethinking the Youth and the Ministry* (Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2005), 209.

Four Quadrants of Life Review

Shadow to Contemplate

Palmer writes, “Life is not only about strengths and virtues, but also about liabilities and limits, trespasses and shadows.”³⁷ Shadow can be interpreted as a hidden area that those in front cannot see, or it can be interpreted as an image behind one’s back revealing behaviors or motivations that not even the subject realizes. In the Johari window, a technique used to help people better understand their relationship with themselves and others, it mentions a “hidden spot” or “dark side,”³⁸ where self knows but not others.³⁹ Apparently, one is running away and trying to escape from revealing such faces; yet, above all, God knows. It also mentions a “blind spot” or “shadow side,” where it is unknown to the person but known to others. One may display repeated behaviors or motives, but without attentiveness the person himself may not realize it; however, those who are in a continuous interactive relationship with that person may come to observe these shadowy spots.

The “dark side” and the “shadow side” are revealed as of the moment here and now, and many times, the former one is related to the repeated sins and the later one is related to repeated patterns in life. Most of the time, the “shadow side” can be traced back to wounds in our life history. When a person is not able to obtain deliverance and healing in these repeated cycles, he will reside in a state of repeated addiction or a state of depressed stagnation. Her life will get stuck and lose the passionate fire

³⁷ Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 6.

³⁸ Joe Mathews, “The Power of Potential,” in *The Meaning of Life Project: Designing a Life Worth Living* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2004), 10.

³⁹ J. Luft, and H. Ingham, “The Johari window, a graphic model of interpersonal awareness” in *Proceedings of the western training laboratory in group development* (Los Angeles: UCLA, 1955).

that motivates life onward. As and when one comes to know the truth, willing to let life be revealed in its light, then “the truth will set him free.” (John 8:32) By then, one’s true potential can gradually be unlocked, authentic life will be vitalized again, and the calling of one’s vocation will ultimately become evident.

In a relational community of grace and personal time of contemplation, people begin to come face to face with the deep inner darkness and shadow, manifested in all the indulgent behaviors of repeated sins and unconscious reactions of repeated patterns in their life. And only in a state of authenticity can the whisperings of the Spirit come into the heart making one aware of the problems; eventually the person turns to God’s grace for deliverance and healing. If people only flit around on the surface, these shadowy forces will overpower them; otherwise, if they dive into the depths of the matters, the time will come when these undesired forces can be uprooted.

Wounds to Forget

As Boa describes wounds, “Many times, . . . the influence of significant others creates ripple effects that continue to touch our lives long after these people are gone. We cannot measure the repercussions because they keep compounding and reverberating in subtle ways through the years.”⁴⁰ Some wounds of the past may be long forgotten, and these require one to go deep into one’s life history.

Meyer states, “Sometimes our identity reflected wounds that were both unrecognized and unhealed, and wrapped up in the psychological patterns of projection

⁴⁰ Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 52.

and transference, display as my ‘Shadow Side’ and played out on those around me.”⁴¹ Transference is the subconscious playing out of unfulfilled issues, such as previous relationships with another person who has no part in the current situation. One can act out irrationally because of the powerful impulses that come from our subconscious. These wounds can make one personally anxious and unsettled, or they can manifest interpersonally in tension and conflict, preventing one from taking the risks of opening ourselves up to love and to be loved.

Modern psychotherapy uses narrative therapy, which seeks to help persons co-author a new narrative about themselves. As a by-product, the psychological patterns of projection and transference located in the old narrative will gradually subside. But for the spiritual life, people seek the divine presence to transfigure stories of their life in order to reconcile the brokenness of the self and its relationship with others and God. “I am the Lord; your healer.” (Exod 15:26) It is the divine Spirit who dramatically and powerfully penetrates and permeates the whole person, such that one can be consumed by the divine embrace and discover how beloved one has been in the eyes of the Lord. Loder gives a brief theological description of such a transformation:

The totality of the lifespan from birth to death is brought under the power and purposes of God and his realization. This realization occurs in the fullness of time so that the present embraces the past, re-envisioning the past in the light of the Divine Presence, and transfigures all that went before and what is implied to come by the Spiritual Presence of God.⁴²

Wounds related to the past need to be forgiven and then reconciled before they can finally be forgotten. To forgive others is to release them from any obligation to make

⁴¹ Keith Meyer, *Whole Life Transformation: Becoming the Change Your Church Needs* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 65-66.

⁴² Loder, *Logic of the Spirit*, 232.

up to you what they have taken from you. If there is no forgiving, there is no forgetting, and thus no healing as the wounds are still lingering in life. No healing results in no deliverance, and one will continue to be trapped in the never-ending cycle of depression and addiction. The spiritual life is about forgiving, reconciling, and forgetting.

Grace to Remember

The Bible is clear that God's love for his people always precedes their love for him. Gratitude is essential to unpack the love of God because it is based on God's gracious character and the expression of his character in the many benefits he has showered upon us. However, people are more inclined to view their lives regarding what they lack than what they receive. Instead of seeing the fullness of what they have received in Christ, they tend to approach experiences from a perspective of deficiency.

The worst of a person is to be ungrateful and forgetful of the goodness one has had. Along one's lifetime, there are signs of grace and blessing, not to mention the common grace for all, if not the special grace for individuals. Even at the moment when one is able to recover from wounds and hurts, this is already grace. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." (Ps 103:2) A person is to locate his identity through all his memories. Most terrifying is when a person loses his memories and forgets his origins and roots, because he will gradually lose track of his ethical, national, and spiritual identities.

Gratitude for what God has done for us in the past can motivate us to trust him in the present for what he is going to do in the future. Grace embraces the whole timeline of one's life. When people develop the habit of recounting the blessings

they have received as God's beloved children, they come to realize his providence for life is all-sufficient, and they become more inclined to view hardships and disappointments from a long-term stance. (Rom 8:18, 28) Love and gratitude are healthy biblical motivators that can help people stay in a healthy process of spiritual formation.

Vocation to Act

James Houston has helpfully pointed out the differences between temperament, personality, and character by defining them: "Temperament is connected with the biological makeup of the person. One is born with a temperament, and it does not change, even after one becomes a Christian. Personality is the result of early interactions with significant others, while character has to do with habits, virtues and vices."⁴³ Taking Houston's reflections further, Robert Solomon writes, "Different temperaments and personalities may express Christian spirituality in different ways, and all are equally biblical and authentic."⁴⁴

Everyone is created in God's image, and each one possesses different bits of intelligence, talents, gifts, and so forth, so that all experience their spiritual life development differently. Scorgie explains, "Calling is a gift from God that satisfies our deep need to be creatively useful and gives us the opportunity to invest our life energy in something of significance. It explains our often-unfulfilled longings for

⁴³ James Houston, "Principles of Spiritual Direction," lecture, Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church, Singapore, 1992.

⁴⁴ Robert M. Solomon, "Contextual Spirituality," in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie and Simon Chan (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 206.

significance, our restless efforts looking for something more.”⁴⁵ For a person to live out his vocation and calling, he needs first to be delivered and set free to live out the authentic self, and gradually regain a vision for the future in order to respond to the specific mission God has laid upon him. “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)

Jesus said, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” (John 14:6) True freedom does not end with the deliverance from shadows and the healing of wounds, but it is according to the Truth to live out the authentic self, free to love God and love others as ourselves. Gordon Smith speaks of “vocational holiness,” which is the holiness of doing what God calls his people to do. It implies two simultaneous sayings, “One is engaged in the world in a way that is congruent with what God is doing in the world, and one is engaged in a way that is consistent with one’s own identity and calling and does the specific world to which one is called.”⁴⁶ Frederick Buechner writes, “The place God calls you to, is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”⁴⁷ It is at the point of these two intersecting lines that God generally calls people, what they need to do and what the world needs to have done.

Vocation is measured according to one’s temperament and personality, and it requires action to manifest such a life. “Faith by itself and without works is dead.” (Jas 2:17) The ultimate aim is never personal growth or spiritual life development. However, it does consist of passionate, enthusiastic, and motivated involvement in stewarding

⁴⁵ Glen G. Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality: Three Dimensions of Life with God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 105-20.

⁴⁶ Gordon T. Smith, *Transforming Conversion: Rethinking the Language and Contours of Christian Initiation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2010), 100.

⁴⁷ Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker’s ABC* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 1994), 119.

God's creation, proclaiming the gospel of Christ, and advancing the kingdom as led by the Spirit.

The Focus of the Framework

Meaning and purpose in life are always positive motivators to encourage spiritual advancement, particularly for young leaders who are at their stage of transition. Their progression in the four quadrants will depend on which one among Shadow, Wounds, and Grace is the primary pointer to the Vocation. For example, Ps 139 takes the Shadow, Wounds, and Grace sequence as it focuses on the magnificent wonders of the personal Creator as the ultimate source to locate one's calling. By contrast, if one focuses upon human struggles as a pointer toward Vocation, it may take a Grace, Wound, and Shadow sequence, as they are the indulgences and handicaps that need to be dealt with before the fulfillment of life can be investigated. Either Shadow, Wound, or Grace can point to Vocation, and the sequence is never a formulated flow of processes. Instead, it is the interactive dynamics of these four quadrants that contribute to the life review of the SLD framework.

Throughout the process of spiritual life development, authenticity is the most important, not only to be true to oneself and others but also to be true to the Truth. Young leaders may have experienced setbacks, suffocated fears, identity confusions, distress, addiction, passivity, or self-exile, such that the associated wounds and shadow may continue to make them stumble in their lives. Still, once the grace of deliverance and healing is experienced, the inside world will begin to be in touch with the Truth, and life will never be the same.

Reinitiating the Spiritual Formational Journey

This thesis-project has been revisiting the spiritual needs of young leaders and the ministry gaps of youth work. The spiritual formational deficiency of youth ministry where the situations of the fragmented, disconnected, and reduced missional life are considered. The fragmented life prevents identity formation in Christ from happening and would require a life review and integration as of the present moment, past life, identity exploration, and future outlook. The disconnected life prevents wholistic spirituality from happening and would require a relational community to relate authentically, reconcile separation, reposition concern, and rediscover humanness. The reduced missional life prevents missional discipleship from happening and would require a spiritual journey to facilitate an inward discipleship transformation into loving God and an indicative outward missional vocation into loving neighbor, which includes the process of awakening, purgation, illumination, and toward unification.

These subject matters are intended to be discussed in such a way corresponding to the performing, unhelped, self-focused, and trapped spiritual needs of young leaders respectively. Relate authentically to review the values from within, aware the limitation of one's self-constructing ways of life, and eventually motivate for a higher purpose in life are a necessary spiritual life development for the performing leader. Recognize the divine presence in life, facilitate a healing process putting things right inside, and gradually reconcile relational separation allowing intimacy to put through are necessary for the unhelped helper. Cultivate self-contentment in the Lord and loving-kindness toward others, reposition passion with compassion before register with inappropriate roles, and intentionally explore one's identity open-heartedly are necessary for the self-focused

survivor. And finally, discover humanness in its true worthiness, turn to Christ for the ongoing narration of the next page in life, and continuously accumulate the longings for God and his righteous are necessary for the trapped identity of young leaders.

The goal is to let the young leaders be delivered such that they may serve the Lord. (see Exod 9:1) The process of the spiritual life development for young leaders would be awakening from performing-ness, purgation from unhelped-ness, illumination for otherness than self-focused-ness, and toward unification in the true identity as the people of God. The thesis-project continues to reimagine a spiritual formation journey for young leaders based on the four quadrants of the SLD framework as discussed: shadow to contemplate, wounds to forget, grace to remember, and vocation to act. In response to the spiritual needs of young leaders and the spiritual formation deficiency of youth ministry, a spiritual journey is to be reinitiated. The SLD framework is translated into several ministering themes: repeated pattern, unfulfilled memory, life sufficiency, and passionate goal. And aspects of spiritual growth correspond to the spiritual needs are marked for measurement: authentic life vitalized, Lovingly differentiated, otherness focused, and missionally motivated. The four quadrants of the SLD framework are all connected and interwoven together and do not necessarily follow a single linear progression. And so are the four spiritual needs of young leaders. The primary focus is the facilitation of transformational growth and the establishment of relational community, while the vocational pathfinding will remain as indicative milestones toward becoming the missional disciple. The following summaries (see table 4.1) show what this thesis-project discusses and will be taken as the hardpan for project design and outcome assessment.

Table 4.1. Summary of Discussion

Revisit Problem Settings	Restate Spiritual Formation Essences			Re- imagine SLD Framework	Reinitiate Spiritual Journey		
	Transfor- mational	Relational	Vocational				
<i>Ministry Focus Spiritual Need</i>	<i>Identity Exploration</i>	<i>Wholistic Spirituality</i>	<i>Missional Discipleship</i>		<i>Four Quadrants</i>	<i>Ministry Theme</i>	<i>Spiritual Growth</i>
			<i>Inward</i>	<i>Outward</i>			
Performing Leader (Meaning)	Present Moment	Relate Authentically (Value)	<i>Awakening</i>		Shadow to Contemplate	Aware of Repeated Pattern	Authentic Life Vitalized
			Love God	Love Neighbor			
			<i>End of Rope</i>	<i>Being Care-full & Cared for</i>			
Unhelped Helper (Being)	Past Life History	Reconcile Separation (Intimacy)	<i>Purgation</i>		Wounds to Forget	Aware of Unfulfilled Memory	Lovingly Differen- tiated
			All Your Heart	Walk Humbly			
			<i>Lost Most Dear</i>	<i>Inside Put Right</i>			
Self- Focused Survivor	Identity Exploration (Time & Space)	Reposition Concern (Roles)	<i>Illumination</i>		Grace to Remember	Aware of Life Sufficiency	Otherness & God- Focused
			All Your Soul	Love Kindness			
			<i>Content with Oneself</i>	<i>Cooperate Rather Than Compete</i>			
Trapped Identity (Passion)	Future Outlook	Rediscover Humanness (Worth)	<i>Toward Unification</i>		Vocation to Act	Aware of Passionate Goal	Missionally Motivated
			All Your Might	Do Justice			
			<i>Long for God</i>	<i>Fully Committed to God</i>			
	<i>Fragmented Life</i>	<i>Disconnected Life</i>	<i>Reduced Missional Life</i>				

The Project

Project Overview

The Young Leader Training (YLT) project is a response to what has been discussed so far in this thesis-project. It focuses on the delivery of training programs and the training community, designed in the Spiritual Life Development (SLD) framework to encourage spiritual life development for young leaders. It is a three-year project from 2015 to 2017, where different groups in the same church settings for each year will go through the same set of training programs and composition of the training community.

The “young leader” refers to college youth, who are the core members and leaders in the youth ministry of a twelve-thousand-member megachurch, and in transition from youth to young adult. Each year around fifteen to twenty-two young leaders in three treatment groups will go through the YLT project. The training programs and community interact with the four quadrants of the SLD framework using the lifeline approach. First, participants take the past wounds to settle unresolved wounds in their personal concerns; then move on to work on the shadow; and eventually they recall the grace of God as the foundation to inquire into their future vocation in a broader coverage of concerns.

The research aims to provide evidence that the training programs and training community under the four quadrants of the SLD framework are effective in facilitating spiritual life development in response to the ministry gaps of young leaders, and spiritual growth in response to the spiritual needs of young leaders.

The Participant — Young Leader

YanFook Church belongs to the denomination of Evangelical Free Church of China (EFCC), started in 1984. It is a branch from its mother church, EFCC Waterloo Hill Church. In 1986, the church grew to 250 people and became independent. In 2004, the church built the twenty-four-floor Yan Fook Center and reached five thousand members. By 2008, more than ten thousand members were attending, and it has become the largest church in Hong Kong.⁴⁸ In 2016, the overall number of members has grown to twelve thousand. The church is well-known for its structured Bible studies series and encouragement of members to involve themselves in ministries as volunteer workers. Functionally organized, and active in social services as well as social issues, the church is more than a physical landmark in Hong Kong. It is also an icon of the fundamental Christian faith.

The youth ministry has about six hundred members and consists of three ministry zones: Junior (Form 1 to Form 3), Senior (Form 4 to Form 6), and College (Year 1 to Year 3).⁴⁹ There are around fifty-five to sixty small groups with the following ministry structure:

- ✓ Youth Ministers, around three of them, who are full-time workers with seminary training. Each assumes responsibilities for the above-mentioned ministry zones and share each other's burdens.

⁴⁸ EFCC Yan Fook Church, "Yan Fook Church's History," accessed August 4, 2016, <http://www.yanfook.org.hk/history.php>.

⁴⁹ The junior age group is from 12 to 15, senior from 15 to 18, and college from 18 to 21.

- ✓ Zone Supervisors, around five, committed lay leaders in the youth ministry, who assist the youth minister in supervising a set of small groups within the ministry zone.
- ✓ Youth Workers, around twenty, lay volunteers from the adult ministry, who follow the church practices to identify a ministry to serve. Their years of services range from 1 to 3 years. Upon their commitment increased and ministry skills matured, they will be invited to be the Zone Supervisor.
- ✓ Group Leaders, around eighty, senior high and college youth, who will facilitate the operation of the small group, such as post-sermon sharing or Bible studies, and attend to various service teams in the Youth Ministry.

“Life Transformation: Live out a Missional Life” was laid out as the ministry direction of 2015 to 2020. This theme was posted in the youth ministry yearly magazine *SFIC (Stand Firm in Christ)*. It reflects that the ministry has long lacked a pastoral culture of life nurturing and discipleship, and it is time for refocusing and reformation. The youth ministry pastor in charge highlights that such refocusing is only laying a foundation for its ultimate goal. The ultimate goal is “to build up the emerging generation, such that they can take up the heritage of the kingdom, with integrity and commitment in the faith, in becoming the vision-bearer for the Mission of God.”⁵⁰

Around 60 percent of the church youth are second-generation Christians; either one or both of their parents is Christian. They are typically those who have much biblical knowledge after completing numerous Bible studies series, yet their spiritual life remains within the church activities, and they have limited firsthand faith experience. These

⁵⁰ David Fong, “Life Transformation, live out a Missional Life,” in *SFIC Stand Firm In Christ* (Yan Fook Church Youth Ministry, 2015), 22.

youth are looking for self-differentiation, a developmental stage of identity formation in which they search for meaning and roles. They belong to the typical middle-class culture; they are elegant, as are their professional parents; they struggle within but remain calm outside; they are self-centric but pretend to be nice; and they are intelligent — a fact which they accentuate to be prominent — but with low self-esteem.

Young leaders in the church who are selected for this project are college youth who have been senior members in the youth ministry and have assumed various responsibilities, in particular, leading the small groups. They are those most committed and willing to serve in the youth ministry. These young leaders are also going through their transition from school to work; yet, most of them have not gone through any personal growth or spiritual life review. Spiritual formation for them is remote and unfamiliar; nevertheless, it remains at their core and felt needs.

The Training Program

A total of twenty training sessions are mainly three-hour workshops each, except a few with outdoor adventures or ceremonial services. In the workshops, forty-five minutes of group time are the key focus in bringing out the spiritual formation theme of the day. Before group time, the sessions begin with experiential learning and a short talk based on the training theme of that day. It usually comes with a worksheet to record thoughts, so that during group time more personal sharing can be facilitated. The session often ends with a summary, and personal journaling after the training allows reflection to go deeper. (See appendix C for an overview of each of the training sessions and appendix D for a sample lesson plan and script of training session 8.)

Each training session focuses on a training theme that corresponds to the SLD framework, with a specific worksheet to assist in reflection. The reflections are recorded for later assessment. The following is the set of training programs (refer to appendix B, “Overview of the Program Schedule,” for the details).

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. YLT initiation | 11. What is my priority in life |
| 2. Day camp stream trekking | 12. What is my passion in life |
| 3. How one comes to know oneself | 13. What does it take to be a disciple |
| 4. How was I being formed | 14. Review and pre-camp |
| 5. Impression of parents | 15. Overnight camp: life journey |
| 6. Ceremony: unforgettable pain | 16. Overnight camp: challenges |
| 7. Night journey | 17. Overnight camp: consolidation |
| 8. What prevents growth in life | 18. Rite of passage preparation |
| 9. What prevents growth in Christ | 19. Rite of passage declaration |
| 10. Ceremony: solemn assembly | 20. Review and evaluation |

These training sessions are grouped into the five stages to facilitate progressive learning for young leaders. Stage I, trust building, covers training sessions 1 and 2, which facilitate the process for young leaders to setting initial goals for the whole YLT project. Sessions 1 and 2 also establish a relationship of trust within the training community, where psychological trust is encouraged through a set of physical trust adventure programs.

Stage II, self-understanding, covers training sessions 3 to 7. This stage begins with the SLD framework of Grace in sessions 3 and 4, where young leaders are encouraged to work through a communication tool called “The Awareness Wheel,”⁵¹ which will be used to facilitate life reflection across the training community. Life reflection starts with one’s trails of character formation, recalling all the amazing times one becomes

⁵¹ Sherod Miller, Elam W. Nunally, and Daniel B. Wackman, “The Awareness Wheel,” in *Alive and Aware: Improving Communications in Relationships* (MN: Interpersonal Communication Programs, 1975).

the person one is now. While most young leaders would have their characters formed during their previous developmental stages of life, most of the trails reside in family interacting with parents and siblings, and there will be times of unwelcome memories or even unforgettable regrets recalled. Then the training programs will move onto the SLD framework of Wounds in sessions 5 to 7, where young leaders are invited to go through their developmental memories and disturbed relationship which have long been subtle influences in their lives. This stage ends with session 7, an adventure program during night time, to simulate the dark hours in life. Yet, they also experience overcoming within the community of grace, and recognize the presence of divine grace is to be found even in the darkest hour.

Stage III, self-confrontation, covers training sessions 8 to 13. This stage begins with the SLD framework of Shadow in sessions 8 to 10, where young leaders are guided to reflect upon their repeated patterns that many times hold one back from growth or advancement in life, be it related to thinking, feeling, or behaving. This stage also touches on repeated sins that draw one back from maturing in Christ's image. The framework of Shadow ends with session 10, a time of ceremonial worship and prayers, in which repentance and mercy are to be sought in God's hand. With the Wounds and Shadow covered, the programs will move onto the SLD framework of Vocation in sessions 11 to 13, where young leaders are invited to go through their vocational pathfinding. These sessions begin with reflection about the intentional priorities one is practicing in life, in reviewing one's values and worldview. Next is to recall possible or potential themes of life one has been developing, and discovering the passion, purposes, and personal development one will obtain during the process. Last but not

least is to understand that the necessary process of becoming a missional disciple is the shift of life focus from self to otherness, as well as to God, which is the fundamental essence the Beatitudes have been advising.

Stage IV, reflective-consolidation, covers training sessions 14 to 17, which is a three-day outdoor camping experience, a simulated outward journey for young leaders to put into practice what has reflected throughout the training program. Stage V, life transition, covers training session 18 to 20, in which young leaders will invite their family and significant people to a rite of passage, to share their findings about their life revision journey, and to testify to their intended commitment forward.

The training programs include the following objectives: to promote a whole life transformation, to facilitate personal and spiritual growth, to connect past and future segmented and forgotten stories into an integration, to generate a free-from dynamic from the bondage of wounds and shadow such that life can be moved forward to the future, to reveals the free-to dynamic onto the pathway of individual vocation, and to pursue missional discipleship in the kingdom of God.

The Training Community

Within the community, around five to eight young leaders are placed in a treatment group, led by one youth ministers with optionally another youth worker, with a total of three treatment groups throughout each year of 2015 to 2017. There are four spheres of setting within the community that young leaders are experiencing: the personal sphere, where individual young leaders go through self-reflection and journal logging; an in-circle sphere, where young leaders share among their peers within

the same treatment group, guided by the training worksheet; a private sphere, where discipleship mentoring and spiritual direction occur between individual young leaders and the youth minister; and a public sphere, where the whole training community will come together for each young leader to give a summary of status and learning.

The training community includes the following objectives: to stimulate authentic sharing such that life can be more transparent, to facilitate an interactive platform for self-awareness and contemplation, to establish a therapeutic atmosphere of relationship such that friendly, affectionate feeling can bring forward positive transference resulting healing in the soul, and to encourage cross-generational mentoring and coaching in sharing wisdom of life as well as a pathway in following God.

The Research

The research question focuses on how are the training programs and the training community, reflecting the essences of the SLD framework, effective in facilitating spiritual life development, in response to the spiritual needs of young leaders? The research method is a mixture of quantitative analysis and qualitative explanatory materials, which seek to identify the findings during the execution of the YLT project. The research consists of a randomized treatment group of young leaders. The research project will cover three years. Each year, participants will go through the same content in the training programs and the same composition of the training community but different treatment groups of young leaders.

There are three parameters in the research: the young leader as the subject of study, the training programs, and the training community. Three areas of research

assessments are covered: quantitative assessment of the YLT project across 2015 to 2017, quantitative assessment of the SLD framework in 2017, and qualitative assessment of the SLD framework in 2016 and on selected young leaders in 2017. The three assessments are supported by quantitative assessment tools on program evaluation and growth evaluation, as well as various qualitative assessment tools.

Quantitative Assessment Tools — Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is one of the two quantitative questionnaires (see appendix E). It focuses on the execution of the training and consists of the following sets of questions; the overall responses and effect of the YLT project (sets A and B), the delivery of the training programs (set C), and the effect and delivery of the training community (sets D and E). Sets of questions A and E are the expanded evaluation only in 2017.

Set A, “Overall Response of the YLT Project” refers to the work of Vertallier, which gives an overall evaluation of whether the participants see the training programs as effective to them.⁵²

1. Facilitate effective learning and reflection
2. Encourage participation and positive motivation
3. Promote spiritual life growth
4. Able to relate one’s spiritual growth to biblical teaching

Set B, “Overall Effect of the YLT Project” (1 to 4), refers to the four areas of spiritual growth (authentic life vitalized, lovingly differentiated, otherness and God-

⁵² Bruno R. Vertallier, “Appendix L: Pre and Post Evaluation Questionnaire for the Spiritual Formation Class,” in *Graduate Research of D.Min. Andrews University: A Design for Spiritual Formation during the Academic Life of the Adventist Seminary Student at Collonges-Sous-Saleve, France*, accessed August 14, 2016, <http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dmin>.

focused, missionally motivated) and gives an overall evaluation of how participants see the project is effective to them relationally. Question 5 is an additional one of the overall evaluation on how mature young leaders see their leadership has evolved.

1. Help you to become more authentic in relating to oneself
2. Help you to become more differentiated in relating to family
3. Help you to become more relational in relating to others
4. Help you to become more mature to show people to Christ
5. Help you to become more mature as a young leader

Set C, “Delivery of the Training Programs,” marks most but not all of the training programs to be evaluated, both quantitatively (with a rank to give) and qualitatively (with what has been learned).

Training Stage I: Trust building

2. Day camp: stream trekking (trust building)

Training Stage II: Self-understanding

3. Grace: How one comes to know oneself (self-awareness)
4. Grace: How was I being formed (character trail)
5. Wound: Impression of parents and the heavenly Father (father image)
7. Wound: Night journey through wartime tunnel and dam (overcoming)

Training Stage III: Self-confrontation

8. Shadow: What prevents growth in life (repeated patterns)
9. Shadow: What prevents growth in Christ (repeated sins)
11. Vocation: What is my priority in life (fifteen-year plan)
12. Vocation (Purposeful): What is my passion in life (life passion)
13. Vocation (Missional): What it take to be a disciple (God-centric)

Training Stage IV: Reflective consolidation

17. Overnight camp (overcoming fear; determination)

Training Stage V: Life transition

19. Rite of passage: declaration and family sharing (testimony)

Set D, “Effect of the Training Community,” refers to the work of Vertallier, which gives an overall evaluation of whether participants see the training community as

effective for them.⁵³ Instead of covering all four spheres of the community setting (personal, in circle, private, public), only the in-circle sphere (small group) and the private sphere (one-on-one coaching) are selected.

1. Are they listening
2. Are they sensitive
3. Are they supportive
4. Are they encouraging dialogue

Set E, “Delivery of the Training Community,” gives an overall evaluation of how participants see the community, covering all four spheres of the community setting (personal journal reflection, in-circle small group sharing, private one-on-one coaching, and public altogether expression). Questions 1 to 5 consist of a progressive logic of spiritual growth; one needs to be wholeheartedly setting his path of life in Christ (4) to be closer to Jesus (5); one needs to be ready to be confronted with the shadow and wounds (3) to walk an authentic life in Christ; one needs to be honest with oneself (2) to be able to face one's indulgences and handicaps; and one needs first to listen and be self-aware (1) to be truthful.

1. Help you to listen to yourself
2. Help you to share truthfully
3. Help you to face your weakness and shadow
4. Help you to start to discover your path in life
5. Help you to be closer to Jesus

Quantitative Assessment Tools — Growth Evaluation

Growth evaluation is another one of the two quantitative questionnaires (see appendix F). It consists of the following sets of questions which focus on measuring

⁵³ Vertallier, “Appendix L: Pre and Post Evaluation.”

the spiritual life development of the participants, from the spiritual characteristics of them before training (sets A and B), to the awareness acquired after training (set C), and further to the indicative spiritual growth after training (sets D, E, and F). The indicative spiritual growth covers three areas: relational, transformational, and missional. While the thesis-project covers three years, the evaluation is expanded from only set D in 2015 and 2016 to the complete full set in 2017.

Set A, “Emptiness Characteristics” only in the 2017 questionnaire, includes the “tend-to” set of questions which consist of the “empty-self characteristics.”⁵⁴ Seven attributes of what psychologists call the empty self are identified: inordinate individualism, extended adolescence, narcissism, passivity, sensuality, lack of interior life, and hurried and busy lives. As Moreland describes, “It is constituted by a set of values, motives, and habits of thought, feeling, and behavior that perverts and eliminates the life of the mind and makes maturation in the way of Christ extremely difficult.”⁵⁵

1. I tend to create meaning on my own shelves
2. I tend to dislike boredom and dull, enjoy amusement & pleasure
3. I tend to preoccupy with my own preferences and needs
4. I tend to let other people do my living and thinking for me
5. I tend to judge reality based on images and sensation than reasoning
6. I tend to attend to external quality (pleasurable, outlook, image) than internal quality (virtue, fidelity, intellectual, spirituality)
7. I tend to fill my life with activities and jump from task to task

Set B, “Spiritual Needs” only in the 2017 questionnaire, is the “usually” and “recognize” set of questions which consist of indicators that reflect the spiritual needs

⁵⁴ Jim Davids, “Research on Spiritual Development,” Regent University Academics Affairs, accessed August 14, 2016, https://www.regent.edu/academics/academic_affairs/faculty_essentials/welcome/resources/Research_On_Spiritual_Development.pdf, 1.

⁵⁵ J. P. Moreland, *Love Your God with All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1997), 88.

of the participant: performing leader, unhelped helper, self-focused survivor, and trapped identity. The “usually” is an affirmation set of questions, while the “recognize” is a reverse set. The scoring of the reverse set displayed in the outcome assessment has been reversed for ease of analysis and comparison.

Set C, “Awareness Acquired” only in the 2017 questionnaire, includes the “aware” set of questions which consist of indicators that reflect the degree of awareness the participant has acquired during the training programs.

Set D, “Relational Growth,” is composed of the “degree of” set of questions which consist of indicators that reflect the degree of growth the participants has obtained after the training in regard to one’s relationship with oneself, family, others, and Jesus.

Set E, “Transformational Growth” only in the 2017 questionnaire, includes the “discover” set of questions which consist of indicators that reflect the degree of growth the participant has obtained: authentic life vitalized, lovingly differentiated, otherness and God-focused, and missionally motivated.

Set F, “Missional Growth” only in the 2017 questionnaire, includes the “realize” set of questions which consist of indicators that reflect the degree of growth in a tendency toward missional discipleship development (the Beatitudes model), care-full and care for, inside put right, cooperate then complete, and committed to God.

The growth evaluation is designed to fit with the SLD framework, and the sets of questions are composed in reference to the summary of measuring keywords (see appendix A). In other words, the sets of questions from B to F can be regrouped by each quadrant of the SLD framework for outcome assessment.

For Shadow:

- ✓ Needs
 1. I usually enjoy being in a necessary role to deliver something
 2. I recognize as of now a meaningful purpose life is moving to
- ✓ Awareness
 3. I am aware certain repeated patterns hinder life from going far
 4. I am aware certain repeated sins hinder life from going deep
- ✓ Relational
 5. Degree of understanding of self
 6. Degree of appreciation of self
- ✓ Transformational
 7. I discover I can share myself truthfully and completely
 8. I discover life starts to integrate when I am truly inside out
- ✓ Missional
 9. I realize a determination to deal with my repeated problem
 10. I realize my world starts resting on an order

For Wounds

- ✓ Needs
 1. I usually put aside emotions and struggles, just to get things done
 2. I recognize my past and am content with whom I have become
- ✓ Awareness
 3. I am aware God is present and shares my deep hurts or pains
 4. I am aware God dissolves my unsettled grief and dissatisfying past
- ✓ Relational
 5. Degree of understanding of parents
 6. Degree of ties with parents
- ✓ Transformational
 7. I discover my misfortune differently and let go the cause
 8. I discover I am more a beloved person of God than before
- ✓ Missional
 9. I realize every day I get closer to whom I will become
 10. I realize I can be at peace with those in conflict with me

For Grace

- ✓ Needs
 1. I usually focus on my own interest to manage my life
 2. I recognize life is too narrow when I only focus on myself
- ✓ Awareness
 3. I am aware of trails of God's grace in various incidents of my life
 4. I am aware God's grace helps me to embrace my life and others

- ✓ Relational
 - 5. Degree of connection with others
 - 6. Degree of truthfulness with others
- ✓ Transformational
 - 7. I discover my narrow heart of pride and self-interest
 - 8. I discover the focus of my story is not just about me
- ✓ Missional
 - 9. I realize life has many alternative possibilities in God
 - 10. I realize God has given me much more to share with others

For Vocation

- ✓ Needs
 - 1. I usually feel exhausted after serving and sometimes feel empty
 - 2. I recognize my role and purpose after all these years of serving
- ✓ Awareness
 - 3. I am aware I have compassion for certain people
 - 4. I am aware my gifts match with the ministry I am serving
- ✓ Relational
 - 5. Degree of appreciation toward life
 - 6. Degree of desire for vision of life
 - 7. Degree of knowing what it is to walk with Jesus
 - 8. Degree of passion to walk with Jesus
- ✓ Transformational
 - 9. I discover I should be more focused to pursue my calling
 - 10. I discover I am more excited with God's mission than my own gain
- ✓ Missional
 - 11. I realize what is right to stand for and am willing to take the heat
 - 12. I realize what I am living for and am willing to pay the costs

Qualitative Assessment Tools

There are four sets of assessment tools to gather from the four spheres of the training community: in-circle sphere worksheet reflections, public sphere verbal expression, private sphere individual interview, and personal sphere journal log.

The in-circle sphere worksheets are based on the training theme are provided during most of the training sessions to facilitate personal reflection and group sharing. Below are the questions listed on each of the worksheets during the training sessions

of the program. Questions from stage I, IV, and V are tools for the overall assessment of the SLD framework, while questions from II and III are tools for the assessment of the four quadrants of the framework.

Stage I: Trust building

- ✓ Training 1 YLT initiation; Worksheet: Purpose of Joining
 - a. How would you describe yourself?
 - b. What are your challenges when serving?
 - c. What are your expectations for this training?
 - d. What are your challenges in attending this training?

Stage II: Self-understanding

- ✓ Training 4: How was I being formed? Worksheet: Trail of Character
 - a. What type of person are you? What are your characteristics?
 - b. How are these characteristics being influenced? By persons, incidents?
- ✓ Training 5: Impression of parents; Worksheet: Father Image
 - a. How would you describe the image of your father at home?
 - b. How would such an image bring a difference to your life?
 - c. How would it affect your understanding of the heavenly Father?
 - d. What would you say to your heavenly Father as of now?

Stage III: Self-confrontation

- ✓ Training 8: What prevents growth in life? Worksheet: Repeated Patterns
 - a. Describe your repeated emotions, behaviors, thinking as of now.
 - b. How would these repeated patterns prevent your life from progressing?
- ✓ Training 9: What prevents growth in Christ? Worksheet: Repeated Sins
 - a. Checklist of trespasses: thoughts, behavior, relationship, lust, etc.
 - b. Share about the difficulties in facing these trespasses.
- ✓ Training 11: What is my priority in life? Worksheet: Fifteen-Year Plan
 - a. What will the most enjoyable and meaningful life be as of now?
 - b. What will the most enjoyable and meaningful life be in fifteen years?
- ✓ Training 12: What is my passion in life? Worksheet: Shape
 - a. What is more energizing for you: people, purposes, actions?
 - b. What is your character, temperament, personality, gift?
- ✓ Training 13: What does it take to be a disciple? Worksheet: God-centric
 - a. Consider your priorities and motivations in daily incidents in life.
 - b. How self-centric would it be?

Stage IV: Reflective consolidation

- ✓ Training 14: Review and pre-camp; Worksheet: Me as of Now
 - a. What are your most significant discoveries during the training?
 - b. What more I need do to acquire that is not yet acquired?
- ✓ Training 17: Overnight camp consolidation; Creative Arts: Mask Drawing
 - a. What is the previous Me I have reflected?
 - b. What kind of future Me am I looking forward to?

Training Stage V: Life transition

- ✓ Training 18: Rite of passage preparation; Worksheet: Integrated Learning
 - a. What sort of thanksgivings would you give to your parents?
 - b. Describe the influences your family has had on you.
 - c. What is the area and direction of growth you need to pursue?
 - d. What is the statement of life you would declare?
- ✓ Training 20: Review and evaluation; Worksheet: You See Me and I See You
 - a. To give each other appreciation for their strength and richness
 - b. To give each other reminders of their areas of attention

In the public sphere verbal expression, there are opportunities for participants to express their status of learning and process of growth during training stage IV, Reflective consolidation, and stage V, Life transition. Usually, the expression starts with one sentence of summary and a few expanded sentences to complete the description.

- 7. Night journey: What griefs and unsettled feelings need to be laid down?
- 14. Review and pre-camp: What is the most teachable training so far?
- 17. Overnight camp: What have you reflected about in your life?
- 18. Rite of passage preparation: What learning would you continue to practice?
- 19. Rite of passage declaration: What are you going to share with your family?
- 20. Review and evaluation: What attitude of life have you taken home?

In the private sphere individual interview, the youth minister will interview individual participants of the same treatment group toward the end of the training programs. The following areas are the focus of sharing:

- ✓ What has one learned, and what is the impression of the training programs
- ✓ Matters related to personal and spiritual growth

In the personal sphere journal log, participants are encouraged to write a journal about each training session throughout the training programs; the youth ministers will give responses. The following are the respective training sessions and themes, in particular, that participants would reflect upon.

2. Day camp stream trekking (trust building)
3. How one comes to know oneself?(self-awareness)
4. How was I being formed? (character trail)
5. Impression of parents (father image)
7. Night journey through wartime tunnel and dam (unsettled disturbance)
8. What prevents growth in life? (repeated patterns)
9. What prevents growth in Christ? (repeated sins)
10. Ceremonial solemn assembly (confession and repentance)
11. What is my priority in life? (fifteen-year plan)
12. What is my passion in life? (passion of life)
13. What does it take to be a disciple? (otherness and God-centric)

The Assessment

The three-year project will assess the outcome quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative assessments are based on the program evaluation and growth evaluation as mentioned previously in the Quantitative Assessment Tools, which will have a cross-years comparison and 2017 specifically. The cross-years comparison will include the effect and delivery of the training programs and training community, as well as the effect of the relational growth of the participants. The 2017-specific information will include the characteristics of the participants before training, the effect of the awareness before training, the effect of the spiritual growth (relational, transformational, missional) after training, and the delivery of spiritual life development according to the four quadrants of the SLD framework.

Quantitative Assessment Approach

The quantitative data are gathered by the individual, incorporated into groups, further collected by the same years, and eventually analyzed in the cross-year comparison. The approach of assessment is using the average as the reference of comparison. Each group has a group average, each year a yearly average, and altogether the grand average. A cross-year assessment will make use of the grand average, and assessments within the years will make use of the yearly average. The average gives the level of effect or performance, and it provides a dividing line indicating how many participants perform exceeding well, and how many comparatively not so.

The data are comparable because the items assessed have fixed contextual parameters. Each year across the three years has the same composition of groups, training programs, and training community. All of the training sessions, except the outdoors sessions, are a similar process and proceed with the same set of groups throughout the year. All of the various spheres of the training community will engage the same set of groups, going through the same objective of listening, sharing, reflecting, discovering, and affirming throughout the year. The same three aspects of growth — relational, transformational, and missional — are to be experienced by each participant to assess the various responses toward the four quadrants under the SLD framework.

Qualitative Assessment Approach

The qualitative descriptions are based on the training sessions in-circle sphere worksheets sharing, public sphere verbal expressions, personal sphere journal

reflections, and private sphere individual coaching, as mentioned previously in the Qualitative Assessment Tools of this chapter. The assessments will provide thematic expressions of spiritual life development across all the groups and participants in 2016, and the narrative description of the SLD framework as of selected participants from 2017.

Thematic Expression

Joseph Maxwell mentions three analytic options for qualitative analysis: memos, categorizing strategies, and contextualizing strategies. For thematic expression of the four quadrants, the categorizing strategies of coding and thematic analysis are used. The thematic analysis is “the sorting of the qualitative data into broader themes and issues,” while the coding analysis is “to ‘fracture’ the comparing qualitative data within and between categories in such a way to aid in the development of a theoretical concept.”⁵⁶ That process would imply the gathered qualitative data will be fractured into discrete codes of characteristics and set them into the frame of expression.

First, the themes “to sort” will focus on the assessment objective of identifying the effect of spiritual life development in terms of the progress of development. These themes are laid out in the form of four questions of reflection to gather the qualitative data: 1, What has one discovered? 2, What has one reflected on in one’s life? 3, What kind of life are you looking forward to? 4 What kind of attitude will you need to acquire to take life forward?

⁵⁶ Joseph A. Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996), 78.

Second, each of these four themes is displayed at a particular training session for qualitative data gathering through the in-circle sphere worksheet reflections and the public sphere verbal expression. In addition, further data clarification is obtained from the private sphere of individual counseling.

What has one **discovered**?

- ✓ Training 14: Review and pre-camp, recapturing the learning
In-circle worksheet: What have I discovered and what more to acquire?
Public expressions: What is the most teachable training so far?

What has one **reflected** on in one's life?

- Training 17: Overnight camp consolidation, debriefing the camp
In-circle worksheet: Previous Me reflected and future ME to look forward
Public expressions: What has one reflected on in one's life?

What kind of life is one **looking forward** to?

- ➡ Training 18: Rite of passage preparation, finishing mask drawing
In-circle worksheet: Thanksgiving; areas of growth; statement of life
Public expressions: What learning would one carry on after training?

What kind of **attitude** does one need to acquire to take life forward?

- ★ Training 20: Review and evaluation, providing the final words
In-circle worksheet: Word of appreciation and encouragement to others
Public expressions: What attitude of life have you taken home?

Finally, the code “to fracture” will be identified from the gathered qualitative data to discover expression of spiritual life development according to the SLD framework.

Narrative Description

Apart from the categorizing strategies of coding and thematic analysis, Maxwell also mentions a contextualizing strategy: “contextualizing analysis attempts to understand the data in context, using various methods to identify the relationships among the

different elements of the text.”⁵⁷ This process will require additional interviews, observation memos, and conversations with the youth workers and parents to identify the contextual information.

First, participants are selected to act as a case representing the spiritual life development characteristics of a particular quadrant of the SLD framework. This selection is partly due to their representativeness among all the participants within the training project and partly on their growth evaluation during the quantitative assessment.

Second, the quantitative data of each selected participant are gathered; these data are sourced from the growth evaluation as mentioned previously in the quantitative assessment tools of this chapter. The data will identify the effect of spiritual life development per each selected participant.

Third, the qualitative data of each selected participant are gathered. These data are sourced from the individual interview, as well as the qualitative tools as mentioned previously in the qualitative assessment tools of this chapter. Such data will identify the contextual details of spiritual life development per each selected participant.

Fourth, a narrative description for each of the selected participant will be given. The data gathered will outline the thoughts, attitude, emotions, behavior, and motivation pertaining to the spirituality of the selected participant before and after the training, the reasons and sources of spiritual blockage, and ways of overcoming such blockages.

⁵⁷ Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*, 79.

Finally, the codes of characteristics within the flow of the narrative description are identified and analyzed in such a way as to provide an understanding of the description of spiritual life development.

What Is Expected

The outcome analysis of the assessments will go through the delivery and effect of the training programs, as well as the training community; the spiritual growth of the participants; and most important of all, the textures of spiritual life development according to the SLD framework.

The assessment would expect to see the training programs demonstrate certain effectiveness in helping participants to grow spiritually, in particular in understanding and awareness of personal life issues; such as repeated patterns, repeated sins, a self-focused, narrow mind, and confusion during the life transition. Also, the assessment would expect to see the various spheres of the training community (private, in-circle, public, personal) contribute certain catalytic effects in facilitating the participants to change.

The assessment would hope to see spiritual growth of the participants in response to their spiritual needs (performing leader, unhelped helper, self-focused survivor, trapped identity). Also, the assessment would seek to discover if the textures of spiritual life development are associated with the summary of measuring keywords (mentioned previously in Reinitiating the Spiritual Formational Journey in this chapter; see also appendix A). In the end, a summary of the spiritual growth markers in each of the four quadrants of the SLD framework are to be identified.

CHAPTER FIVE

OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

Overview of the Assessment

The Young Leader Training (YLT) project was a three-year project from 2015 to 2017, designed as according to the Spiritual Life Development (SLD) framework, as discussed in this thesis-project. The research question focused on “How have the training programs and the training community, reflecting the essences of the SLD framework, been effective in facilitating a spiritual life development in response to the spiritual needs of young Christian leaders?”

Characteristics of the Project across the Years

The YLT project had the same set of training programs and composition of training community throughout the three years with the coverage of the assessment gradually added on. The year 2015 mainly focused on the evaluation of the training programs and training community, as well as the effect on the spiritual growth of the participants. The year 2016, in addition to similar assessments in 2015, included a qualitative evaluation on the overall thematic expression of spiritual life development for all involved participants. The year 2017, in addition to similar assessments in 2015 and 2016, included a complete pre- and post-evaluation, a quantitative evaluation whether missional discipleship is encouraged, and a qualitative evaluation on the narrative description of spiritual life development from selected participants.

Characteristics of the Participants Across the Years

In 2015, 25 participants were involved, with a 95% attendance rate and 21 attendees during the last session of evaluation. Most were 19 to 20 in age, with one 18 and three 21. All were university or college students. Two-thirds were group leaders in the youth ministry, many were involved in other ministry, and only a few were general members. All of them had at least one parent who is Christian. All had come to Christ for over eight years, which implies they had long been through Sunday school.

In 2016, 19 participants were involved, with a 95% attendance rate and 17 attendees during the last session of evaluation. Most were 19 to 20 in age, with one 18, two 21, and one being 22. All were current university or college students, except one dropout from school, and one was working. Most were from local colleges except one from an international school. One-third were group leaders, another one-third were only general members, but a total of two-thirds were involved in other ministry. All except one had at least one parent who is Christian. Most had come to Christ for over eight years while three were young in Christ with less than three years in faith.

In 2017, 15 participants were involved with a 95% attendance rate and 15 attendees during the last session of evaluation. Half of them were university or college students (Participant 33), another half were in their first year of work (Participants 21, 24, and 35), and one was working part-time awaiting further study (Participant 15). Two-thirds were group leaders (Participants 33 and 35), with two at the core team (Participants 21 and 24), and the other one-third were general members (Participant 15). All except two (Participants 21 and 24) had at least one parent who is Christian. And there was one participant (24) whose father had been absent when the participant was young. Most

had come to know Christ for over eight years. Participants 15, 21, 24, 33, and 35 were selected for individual qualitative assessment.

Characteristics of the Assessments

There are three assessments. First, the assessment of the YLT project across three years was based on the quantitative data gathered during 2015 to 2017 which aims to review the effect and delivery of the project:

- ✓ delivery of the training programs
- ✓ delivery of the training community
- ✓ effect of the relational growth
- ✓ effect of the project

Second, the assessment of spiritual life development for 2017 was based on the expanded design of the quantitative pre- and post-evaluation in the year which aims to review the effect and delivery of spiritual life development for young leaders:

- ✓ characteristics of the participants before training
- ✓ degree of the awareness acquired after training
- ✓ effect of spiritual growth after training
- ✓ delivery of spiritual life development

Third, the assessment of the SLD framework was based on the design of the qualitative evaluation in 2016 and 2017 which aims to describe the texture as of the four quadrants of the SLD framework:

- ✓ thematic expression of each SLD quadrant for 2016 on all participants
- ✓ narrative description of each quadrant for 2017 on selected participants

The final aim of the evaluation is to summarize the findings to provide a set of spiritual growth markers for spiritual life development of young leaders.

Assessment of the YLT Project Across Three Years

The assessment was based on the quantitative assessment tool conducted during 2015 to 2017. Note that the scale for relational growth in 2017 was in a seven-scale; thus, the outcomes were normalized to a five-scale to allow cross-year comparison. The purpose was to evaluate the delivery and identify the effect the training programs and training community have had on the participants.

The year 2015 was an initiation to promote a culture of authentic relationship and a practice of life revision in such a way as to identify the foundation for spiritual life development. The year 2016 had precisely the same training sessions except for an addition of three: vocational program 11, what is my priority in life; ceremonial program 6, forgive the unforgettable; and 10, solemn assembly. In other words, the project was enriched with a soulful journey of ceremonial rituals and a motivational journey of pathfinding initiation. Another variation with 2016 was the inclusion of one youth worker in addition to the youth minister in each group; thus, giving higher attention to personal work and more effectiveness in facilitating spiritual growth.

Finally, the year 2017 was the last project among the three years with better implementation as the experiences built up. The project began earlier, in September rather than January, and the training sessions moved to Sunday afternoon rather than weekday nights, creating more space for the participants to relate and reflect.

Delivery of the Training Program

The assessment of selected training sessions across three years is listed (see table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Assessment of the Program (see appendix G)

Stage		Training Session (Rank from 1 low to 5 high)	SLD Quadrant	2015	2016	2017	Item \bar{X}
I	2	Day camp stream trekking		3.4	3.2	3.9	3.6
II	3	How much one knows oneself	Grace	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.1
	4	How am I being formed	Grace	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.8
	5	Impression on parents	Wounds	3.6	3.5	3.8	3.6
	7	Night journey	Wounds	3.9	3.5	4.2	3.9
III	8	What prevents growth in life	Shadow	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.1
	9	What prevents growth in Christ	Shadow	3.7	3.7	4.2	3.9
	12	What's my passion	Vocation	3.2	3.2	3.9	3.4
	13	What it takes to be a disciple	Vocation	4.0	3.6	3.9	3.8
IV	17	Overnight camp		4.2	4.1	4.5	4.3
V	19	Rite of passage and sharing		3.7	4.6	3.9	4.1
Yearly Average				3.6	3.6	4.0	
Grand Average							3.8

For the training sessions, all scorings are above the common average (3.0), and when the assessment is further broken down into people group (see appendix G), 53% of all people group items (52 out of 99) are equal or beyond the grand average of 3.8. Those above the grand average are 7 (3.9), 8 (4.1), 9 (3.9), 17 (4.3), and 19 (4.1),

which indicate there is an increase in engagement and a continuation of growth toward the end. The relatively not as well scored are 3 (3.1), as it is during the initial stage of the journey, and 12 (3.4), which talks about the future and turns out to be a deficiency for most who are still studying. The three highest are 8 (4.1) being the most popular training session on the awareness of repeated patterns, 17 (4.3) being the most popular experiential learning, and 19 (4.1) being the most popular ceremonial gathering.

For the comparison between years, the yearly average of 2017 (4.0) has a better scoring than 2016 (3.6) as well as 2015 (3.6). The year 2017 is the third year of the project, where the realization of the SLD application gradually came into place. Also, the number of participants is reduced from 25 to 19 in 2016, and then to 15 in 2017, which provides a better focus of attention toward individual needs.

For progression by stages, the scoring indicates a positive progression from stage I trust building, gradually picks up toward the end of stage II (self-understanding at 7), becomes very involved at stage III (self-confrontation with 8 and 9), reaches the peak of the training at stage IV (reflective consolidation at 17), and continues the momentum onto stage V (life transition at 19). The strong involvement at stage III reflects the participants are ready to look deep into their lives and are motivated to discover issues that prevent them from taking their lives forward. All these progressions have provided a good foundation when it came to stage IV (reflective consolidation) when the private one-on-one sphere of personal coaching comes in.

For the SLD quadrants, attentive quadrants are 8 and 9 of Shadow as well as 5 and 7 of Wounds, then 3 and 4 of Grace, and finally 12 and 13 of Vocation. The assessment

of 8 (4.1) and 9 (3.9) of Shadow are more reflective than 5 (3.6) and 7 (3.9) of Wounds, displaying that the participants have heavier spiritual needs of performing than unhelped. However, when it comes to 19, where the actual family reconnection took place, the high scoring of 4.1 indicates many unfulfilled memories of the unhelped spiritual needs indeed requires much attention. Although the training programs relating to Vocation may require enrichments to allow the reflections to stand out, the participants are fairly motivated to take further steps to advance their lives.

Delivery of the Training Community

The assessment of all the spheres of the training community is listed (see table 5.2). When comparing the yearly average for all spheres, 2017 (4.0) stands out as the highest, as well as all the spheres in that year (3.8, 4.0, 4.3, 4.1). That year, 2017, has a smaller number of participants as well as a more relaxed hour of training on Sunday, thus allowing more opportunities for reflection and growth.

Table 5.2. Assessment of the Community (see appendix H)

Spiritual Growth Progression (Rank from 1 low to 5 high)	Sphere	2015	2016	2017	Item X̄	Sphere X̄	
1 Listen to yourself	Public Altogether	3.1	3.4	3.8	3.4		
2 Share truthfully		2.9	3.4	3.8	3.4		
3 Face weakness and shadow		2.9	3.4	3.7	3.3		
4 Start discover path of life		3.1	3.4	3.5	3.4		
5 Be closer to Jesus		3.3	4.0	4.0	3.8		
Yearly Average		3.1	3.5	3.8		3.5	
1 Listen to yourself	In-Circle Small Group	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.0		
2 Share truthfully		4.0	3.3	4.3	3.9		
3 Face weakness and shadow		3.9	4.0	4.5	4.1		
4 Start discover path of life		3.7	3.8	3.6	3.7		
5 Be closer to Jesus		3.2	3.8	3.5	3.5		
Yearly Average		3.7	3.8	4.0		3.8	
1 Listen to yourself	Private One-on-One	4.0	3.9	4.7	4.2		
2 Share truthfully		4.2	3.4	4.5	4.0		
3 Face weakness and shadow		3.7	3.7	4.0	3.8		
4 Start discover path of life		3.8	3.8	4.3	4.0		
5 Be closer to Jesus		3.3	3.8	3.8	3.7		
Yearly Average		3.8	3.7	4.3		3.9	
1 Listen to yourself	Personal Journal Writing				4.6	4.6	
2 Share truthfully					4.4	4.4	
3 Face weakness and shadow					4.2	4.2	
4 Start discover path of life					3.6	3.6	
5 Be closer to Jesus					3.7	3.7	
Yearly Average					4.1		4.1
All Spheres Yearly Average					3.5	3.7	4.0

General Observation

Questions of assessment 1 to 5 consist of a sequence of spiritual growth progression where 1 is a buildup for 2, 2 for 3, and so forth. The highest is 1 (4.1) and second is 2 (3.9), and it has the lowering effect where the momentum of spiritual progression gradually reduced along the way (see table 5.3). The beginning of 1 in listening to oneself and 2 to be authentic with oneself are fundamental for subsequent spiritual progression; the better 1 and 2 are being acquired, the more enduring resonance can be obtained subsequently. In all spheres except the public sphere. The effectiveness in building up the intensity in listening and authenticity (1 and 2) has provided the foundation for facing one's weaknesses and shadow (3).

Table 5.3. Assessment of the Community by Spiritual Growth Progression

Spiritual Growth Progression (Rank from 1 low to 5 high)	All Three Years by Sphere				Item \bar{X}	Grand \bar{X}
	Public	In-Circle	Private	Personal (2017 only)		
1 Listen to yourself	3.4	4.0	4.2	4.6	4.1	
2 Share truthfully	3.4	3.9	4.0	4.4	3.9	
3 Face weakness and shadow	3.3	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8	
4 Start to discover path of life	3.4	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.7	
5 Be closer to Jesus	3.8	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.7	
Sphere Average	3.5	3.8	3.9	4.1		3.8

Private Sphere One-on-One

Among the spheres which cover all three years of assessment (see table 5.2), the most preferred one is the private sphere (3.9), as it provides more time to listen and

relate, an ideal platform for profound reflections and in-depth dialogue, and a better sanctuary to guide the participant to anchor on the divine resources for refreshment and awakening.

The private sphere also stands out as the best sphere for 4 (4.0) in life coaching as well as pathfinding guidance (see table 5.2), where the participant not only looks for individual advice but also personal encouragement and affirmation.

In-Circle Sphere Small Group

Among the spheres which cover all three years of assessment (see table 5.2), the next preferred sphere is the in-circle sphere (3.8). Although the private sphere scores 0.1 higher than the in-circle sphere, it is the in-circle sphere which is far more frequent throughout the project. It is an important sphere in which to promote genuine and reflective sharing, as the participants observe others who share truthfully about similar struggles but narrate differently with alternative possibilities. This setting helps to expand perspectives and edifies ways of looking at lives. It becomes a true community, where lives can be shared authentically and support can be acquired in times of struggles.

In helping the participants to face their weakness and shadow (see table 5.4), the in-circle sphere, apart from being the highest scoring for 3 (4.1), has consistently high scoring across the years (3.9 for 2015, 4.0 for 2016, 4.5 for 2017). One can observe from the verbal expression of some participants that they are accumulating longitudinal understandings of themselves within the in-circle sphere and progress onto deeper reflections.

Table 5.4. Assessment of the Community by Question 3

Spiritual Growth Progression (Rank from 1 low to 5 high)	Sphere	2015	2016	2017	Item \bar{X}
3 Face weakness & shadow	Public Altogether	2.9	3.4	3.7	3.3
	In-Circle Small Group	3.9	4.0	4.5	4.1
	Private One-on-One	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.8

Public Sphere Altogether

The lowest sphere average is the public sphere (3.5). The lowest item average of all is question 3 (3.3), also in the public sphere, when it comes to sharing personal weaknesses and shadows. But when it comes to facilitating the participants to be closer to Jesus, the best scoring of 5 (3.8) is within the public sphere (see table 5.2). Periodically the program will invite the participants to summarize one's status of reflection up till the very moment. Many find it important to share what they truly meant publicly, and what is expressed publicly has a symbolic significance as being more intentional and committed. And many training will also end with a summary teaching of the Word and a prayer in response to what has been shared. The public sphere becomes an affirmative platform in delivering wisdom of life through such teaching of the Word.

Personal Sphere Journal Writing

The personal sphere journal reflection has only 2017 statistics and is the second most helpful sphere (4.1) in 2017 (see table 5.5); however, the helpfulness is concentrated in questions 1 to 3 (4.6, 4.4, 4.2). The sphere fits well for self-reflection, but when it comes to enlightenment and discipleship, it would require other means of assisting.

Table 5.5. Assessment of the Community Personal Sphere by Group

All Spheres Across Three Years by Year					Personal Sphere In 2017 by Group				
Sphere (Rank 1 low to 5 high)	15'	16'	17'	\bar{X}	Spiritual Growth (Rank 1 low to 5 high)	1	2	3	\bar{X}
Public Altogether	3.1	3.5	3.8	3.5	1 Listen to yourself	4.2	4.5	5.0	4.6
In-Circle Small Group	3.7	3.8	4.0	3.8	2 Share truthfully	3.8	4.4	5.0	4.4
Private One-on-One	3.8	3.7	4.3	3.9	3 Face weakness and shadow	3.9	4.1	4.5	4.2
Personal Journal			4.1	4.1	4 Start discover path of life	3.2	4.0	3.5	3.6
Yearly Total Average	3.5	3.7	4.0		5 Be closer to Jesus	3.2	4.0	4.0	3.7
Grand Total Average				3.8	Yearly Average		4.1		

The year 2017 is the most disciplined and active in journal reflection; nearly every participant and every training session comes back with a journal log. The effect is realized when it comes to the private sphere (4.3) as well as the in-circle sphere (4.0), as the sharing has become more verbalized and reflections more focused into a deeper level. It illustrates reflecting, journaling, meditating, and verbalizing are important catalysts to facilitate the process of spiritual life development.

Overall Comment

The evaluation indicates an effective delivery of the training community. The intention of the spheres is not knowledge transferal or progress alignment; it is more about interpersonal relations and means of passing on the wisdom of life. It is a process of spiritual formation on the whole of life, and each sphere within the training community has its specific contribution to being the essential catalyst for the purpose.

Effect of Relational Growth

The assessment of relational growth is listed (see table 5.6). Questions of assessment 1 to 10 consist of five pairs about spiritual growth, with the first item in the pair relating to the increase of understanding and connection, and the second item relating to the increase in appreciation and desire for changes. While most before training scorings are below the median 3.0 with a grand average of 2.8, and all the after training scoring goes beyond with a grand average of 3.7, there is an indication of growth throughout the project. When the assessment of the degree of growth is further broken down into people groups (see appendix I), 46% of all people group items (41 out of 90) go beyond the grand average of 0.9.

Table 5.6. Assessment of the Relational Growth (see appendix I)

Relational Growth (Rank from 1 low to 5 high)	SLD Quadrant	Before		After		Growth	
1 Understanding of self	Shadow	2.6		4.0		1.4	
2 Appreciation of self			2.5		3.3		0.8
3 Understanding of parents	Wounds	2.7		3.8		1.0	
4 Ties with parents			2.8		3.6		0.7
5 Connection with others	Grace	2.8		3.7		0.8	
6 Truthfulness with others				3.1		3.8	
7 Appreciation of life	Vocation (Explore Life)	2.7		3.7		1.0	
8 Desire for a vision in life				3.0		3.8	
9 Know what it is to walk with Jesus	Vocation (Missional)	2.9		3.7		0.8	
10 Passion to walk with Jesus				3.1		4.0	
First Item Total Average		2.7		3.7		1.0	
Second Item Total Average			2.9		3.7		0.7
Grand Average		2.8		3.7		0.9	

Related to Self

Questions 1 and 2 are related to self-understanding, 3 and 4 are related to dynamics with the parents, 7 and 8 are related to life direction; these are concerns focused on the well-being of oneself.

Among all the first items of the pairs, the highest degree of growth is 1 (1.4), while the second highest is 3 (1.0) as well as 7 (1.0). Among all the second items of the pairs, the highest is 2 (0.8) as well as 8 (0.8), which are the relative pair of 1 and 7. Moreover, 1 has the lowest before training (2.6) and the largest degree of growth (1.4) resulting in the highest after training (4.0). Thus, all of the self-focused well-being items are among the highest scored items. The training programs are most effective in helping the participants to initiate an understanding, reflection, and reconnection to oneself.

The degree of growth in the second item of the pair, 2 (0.8) and 4 (0.7), has not displayed the same obvious amount of growth as has the first item of the pair, 1 (1.4) and 3 (1.0). Although there is an obvious amount of growth in understanding of the problems, the participants are still handicapped in handling them. This finding reflects the unhelped characteristics, in which the participants are unfamiliar with their shadow and wounds in the first place.

Related to Otherness

Questions 5 and 6 are related to the connection with otherness, and 9 and 10 are related to walking with or being led by Christ; these are the rest of the pairs in the list which are more focused on concerning otherness than the self.

Among all the first items of the pairs, the lowest degree of growth are 5 (0.8) as well as 9 (0.8). Among all the second items of the pairs, the lowest is 6 (0.6) which is also the lowest among all the degree-of-growth items. The training programs are effective in helping the participants to reconnect with oneself, but not as effective in reconnecting with others and Christ. Apparently, the stage of life of the participants is in transition from youth to young adulthood; they remain as self-focused and self-absorbed.

Related to Christ

Questions 9 and 10 are specifically related to Christ, with a degree of growth of 0.8 for 9 as well as 10 which is slightly lower than the overall grand average of 0.9. The assessment shows that the participants have come closer to an authentic spiritual life, but the degree of growth relating to Christ is not as outstanding. Note that the before training scorings of 9 (2.9) and 10 (3.1) are already above the before training grand average (2.8), and 10 (4.0) even remains as the highest among all in the after training category. Although the growth is steady and passion toward Christ remains at a good level, it also reflects the paradigm in relating to Christ has not gone through a deeper level of advancement.

When the analysis is broken down to the level of the people group (see table 5.7), the scorings display a variety of patterns. Selected follow-up discovers that the participants refer to a “good relationship with the Lord” means how much Bible knowledge one has come to know, and not how closely one’s life is related to Jesus. It is very much related to the evangelical tradition which weighs heavily in the Word.

Another follow-up discovers that the evaluation of one's status with Christ is fairly governed by the here-and-now feeling; it is a reflection of the person's emotional stand at that moment. Apparently the participants are fairly absorbed in contemporary religious values and the feeling-driven culture, and the training program has not been able to bring forward a shift of paradigms in this respect.

Table 5.7. Assessment of the Relational Growth with Christ by Year

Relational Growth (Rank 1 low to 5 high)		Before			After			Growth		
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
9 Know what it is to walk with Jesus	2015	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.8	3.7	3.5	0.6	0.7	0.5
	2016	3.3	2.8	2.8	4.3	3.8	3.6	1.0	1.0	0.8
	2017	2.9	2.7	2.0	3.7	3.6	3.0	0.9	0.9	1.0
10 Passion to walk with Jesus	2015	3.5	3.1	3.1	4.0	3.7	3.9	0.5	0.6	0.8
	2016	3.2	3.2	2.8	4.3	4.2	4.0	1.1	1.0	1.2
	2017	3.3	3.4	2.7	4.1	3.9	3.3	0.8	0.5	0.6

Overall Comment

The overall evaluation indicates obvious spiritual growth among all the relational areas. Many participants find it important to share life truthfully, not only because it builds up a closeness in the relationship but also because the long been forgotten acceptance and embracement that would allow people to be able to count their days in the Lord. And more so, it facilitates people to be able to connect with themselves soulfully as well as with their Creator wholeheartedly; in such a way, life can be integrated by talking through feelings or difficulties in life, and these thoughts can be

re-narrated together with those who walk the same path in the presence of the Lord. And some find life needs to move on, to plan for the future, and to jump out of their comfort zone. It reflects that they have not been thinking about life seriously, and the training programs have encouraged them to initiate such a spiritual journey.

Effect of the Project

The assessment of the effect of the project is listed (see table 5.8). Questions of assessment 1 to 4 refer to the four areas of spiritual growth (see appendix A). All scorings are above the benchmark median of 3.0 (see table 5.8). The yearly average for 2015 is 4.1, 2016 is 4.0, and 2017 is 4.0; are all leveled around the grand average of 4.0. This finding indicates the project consistently has 75% effectiveness. When the assessment is further broken down by people groups (see appendix J), there are 29 out of 45 people group items with scorings equal or higher than the grand average, which implies 65% of the participants indicate the program has at least 75% effectiveness on them.

Table 5.8. Assessment of the Effect (see appendix J)

Effect of the Project (Rank from 1 low to 5 high)	SLD Quadrant	2015	2016	2017	Item \bar{X}
1 Authentic in relating to oneself	Shadow	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.3
2 Differentiated in relating to family	Wounds	3.7	3.9	4.1	3.9
3 Relational in relating to others	Grace	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.2
4 Mature to show people to Christ	Vocation	4.3	3.7	3.5	3.8
5 Mature as a young leader		4.0	3.9	3.6	3.8
Yearly Average		4.1	4.0	4.0	
Grand Average					4.0

Across three years, the highest scoring is 1 (4.3), and the scoring is consistently higher than 4.0 across all people groups (see appendix J). This implies the unmasking of untruthfulness as a spiritual need of performing leaders is effective. The basic objective of the training is to stimulate authentic sharing to facilitate an interactive platform for self-awareness and growth. Second highest across three years is 3 (4.2), and the scoring is also consistently higher than 4.0 across all people groups, except group 3 in 2016 (3.6) due to a conflict that occurred between two group members toward the end of the project. There is an indication of maturity from self-focused absorption to other-focused relating.

The other two items lesser in effect are 2 (3.9) and 4 (3.8); 2 shows a progressive increase in scoring from 2015 (3.7) to 2016 (3.9), then to 2017 (4.1). The training programs are helping the participants to relate to its developmental root at times of growing up with parents. On the contrary, 4 shows a progressive decrease in scoring from 2015 (4.3) to 2016 (3.7), then to 2017 (3.5). For 2015, group 2 (4.6) and group 3 (4.4) have exceptionally high scoring, as some participants who are young in Christ were enlightened by the project and gave full scorings on the assessment (see appendix J). For 2016, group 1 (4.3) had the same exception with another participant who was young in age and gave full scoring. For 2017, there was a higher population of those who have long been in Christ, and two-thirds of the participants were above the age of 21, where they are more serious in terms of showing Christ to others. This indicates those who are young in the Lord and young in age tend to be more receptive to spiritual guidance and pure with their faith.

With all the positive scorings in 1 (4.4) and 3 (4.2), the participants have not scored 5 mature as a young leader (3.8) similarly. Selected follow-up discovers that many participants still retain the value of performing, where being a leader would mean one has to be skillful to deliver; thus, their self-assessment as a leader would never be good enough. The participants have experienced spiritual growth; however, when it comes to leading others, they are still ignorant in the ways of maturity and would refer to the existing paradigm of performing.

Summary of the Assessment

The training project aims to create an environment with the content and form relevant to the context of the participants, allowing the participants to be motivated toward the spiritual life development process. In this three-year project, the content is the SLD framework embedded in the design of the training programs, the form is authentic relations within the training community, and the context is the participants in search of identity and meaning toward an intended purpose of life.

The training programs have a positive initiation from stage I (trust building) onward, becoming very involved at stage III (self-confrontation), reaching the peak at stage IV (reflective consolidation) and through the end. The focus of the project on the SLD framework is primarily on shadow and wounds, while grace and vocation are secondary. The year 2017 has the best performance as there is more attention paid to individual participants.

Various spheres in the training community have their specific effects. The in-circle sphere encourages, supports, and expands perspectives; it is the best means

to facilitate the initiation and continuation of the authentic journey. The private sphere is the ideal means to facilitate growth, though it demands the most time in going through in-depth life coaching for each participant. The public sphere turns out to be an excellent sphere in which to crystallize faith, and a sphere to affirm commitment when it is publicly proclaimed. The personal sphere not only plays as an essential mean of journaling reflection with oneself but also conversational reflection with the Spirit.

The project is capable of facilitating spiritual growth among all the relational areas, in particular on self-awareness in understanding oneself, and self-reflection in recognizing one's repeated pattern in life. However, the spiritual growth from self-focused absorption to other-focused truthfulness would still require more guidance for the momentum to go deeper, not to mention the paradigm of young leaders in ways of relating to Christ is awaiting a shift in more intimate connection.

The project aims for personal growth and life transformation as an ongoing process of spiritual life development. An open and embracing atmosphere is essential for an authentic conversation, such that the most truthful inner thought can be revealed. Normative teaching and sermon-like Bible sharing may not be ideal for the context, as one must be cautious that any guidance given does not direct participants toward standard answers. The context of life remains the key to initiate the process of reflection, such that the reflections and teachings along the way can be translated into wisdom. Truthful sharing itself does not bring forward maturity in the authentic self. It is as and when thoughts are being listened to and reframed, under the guidance of the Spirit and the Word. Healing can come forward when the listening is within a community

of grace, and wisdom will blossom when the reframing is within the process of life development.

Assessment of the SLD Framework for 2017

The assessment is only in 2017, which based on the quantitative assessment tool, with the ranking scale of 1 being low to 7 being high. The scope of the assessment will cover the characteristics of the participant; the awareness acquired after the training the effect of spiritual growth in the area of relational, transformational, and missional; and the delivery in the individual sphere of spiritual life development. The purpose is to evaluate the characteristics of the spiritual needs of the participants and identify the effects of the spiritual life development framework throughout the year.

Characteristics of the Participant Before Training

Empty-Self Characteristics

The assessment of the empty-self characteristics of the participants is listed (see table 5.9). Questions of assessment 1 to 7 consist of seven attributes of what psychologists call the “empty self” (see table 5.9).

Of the participants in 2017, 73% show an indication of empty-self tendency benchmarked from the 50% full score, and three show a stronger tendency when benchmarked from the 75% full score. Participant 15 has the highest scoring (38) with a full scoring in passivity, which displays the spiritual need of a trapped identity. Participant 25 has the second highest (37) with a full scoring in individualistic and

extended adolescence, which displays the spiritual need of an unhelped helper. Only participants 21 and 32, with all scorings equal or below the median 4.0, who show relatively no empty-self tendency.

Table 5.9. Empty-Self Characteristics (see appendix K)

Empty Self Characteristics (Rank from 1 to 7)	Year 2017 Participant Reference Number																Participant Above Median	
	11	12	13	14	15	21	22	23	24	25	31	32	33	34	35			
1 Inordinate individualistic	5	6	5	6	6	4	5	6	6	7	6	4	3	5	6	12	80%	
2 Extended adolescence	4	3	5	6	4	4	4	3	5	7	5	4	5	2	5	7	47%	
3 Narcissism	5	4	5	6	5	3	6	5	4	6	6	3	3	6	4	9	60%	
4 Passivity	1	2	3	5	7	3	5	6	7	5	2	4	4	7	5	8	53%	
5 Sensuality	2	5	2	4	5	3	5	6	2	6	4	3	5	6	5	8	53%	
6 Lack of interior life	2	2	3	4	6	2	4	2	4	5	3	3	3	5	4	3	20%	
7 Hurried, busy lives	4	3	5	6	5	4	5	2	4	1	1	4	4	2	3	3	20%	
Total	23	25	28	37	38	23	34	30	32	37	27	25	27	33	32			
> 50% Full Score (25)			28	37	38		34	30	32	37	27		27	33	32	11	73%	
> 75% Full Score (36)				37	38					37						3	20%	

There are four empty-self characteristics displayed more heavily in the population; individualism has 80%, narcissism 60%, and passivity and sensuality 53%. There are two characteristics which were displayed less heavily: both lack of interior life and hurried, busy lives have 20%. Most participants being a member at church may identify themselves with something meaningful for their interior life, which may not be the case. And many are obviously heavily engaged but do not see busyness has become a means to prove one's existence.

The empty-self provides an understanding of spiritual characteristics, thoughts, motives, feelings, and behaviors, which in the contemporary generation makes the way of spiritual maturity in Christ difficult. Taking the benchmark from the 50% full score level, all except four participants (11, 12, 21, 32) during 2017 are found to have various kinds of empty-self characteristics that would require certain spiritual life development attentiveness.

Spiritual Needs Characteristics

The assessment of the spiritual needs characteristics of the participants is listed (see table 5.10). Questions of assessment 1 to 8 compose of four pairs that correspond to the spiritual needs of the four spheres of the SLD framework. The highest sphere average is Shadow (4.7), together with the highest item average being 2 (5.2) and the third being 1 (4.3); it displays the spiritual need of a performing leader. The second highest sphere average is Grace (4.3), together with the second highest item average being 6 (5.0); it displays the spiritual need of a self-focused survivor.

The third sphere average is Vocation (3.8), and forth is Wounds (3.7), and for the item average, both 7 (4.0) of Vocation and 4 (4.0) of Wounds are the fourth highest. Although the two of them come in very close, looking into the statistics by group, there is an unusual high scoring in 4 among group 3 (5.0) in Wounds, which pulls up its sphere average, and a relative low scoring in 7 among group 2 (3.0) of Vocation, which leveled it.

Table 5.10. Spiritual Needs Characteristics (see appendix L)

Spiritual Need Before Training (Rank from 1 low to 7 high)	Group			Item \bar{X}	SLD Sphere	Sphere \bar{X}
	1	2	3			
1 Enjoy being in a necessary role to deliver something	4.2	4.6	4.0	4.3	Shadow Performing Leader	4.7
2 Recognize NOT a meaningful purpose in life	5.7	5.8	4.0	5.2		
3 Put aside emotions and struggles to get things done	3.2	3.8	3.0	3.3	Wounds UnHelped Helper	3.7
4 Recognize NOT my past nor content with whom I am	3.6	3.4	5.0	4.0		
5 Focus on my own interest to manage my life	3.4	3.4	3.8	3.5	Grace Self- Focused Survivor	4.3
6 Recognize NOT life is too narrow if focus on myself	5.0	5.2	4.8	5.0		
7 Feel exhausted after serving and sometimes feel empty	4.4	3.0	4.6	4.0	Vocation Trapped Identity	3.8
8 Recognize NOT role & purpose after years of serving	3.2	3.4	4.2	3.6		
Grand Average		4.1				

The spiritual needs of the participants are strong first with the performing leader of Shadow, second with the self-focused survivor of Grace, and third with the trapped identity of Vocation. Perhaps the indication for the unhelped helper of Wounds now displays as at the end of the list; the state of being an unhelped helper is not easy to be identified by the participant's self-evaluation. The assessment of Wounds is later found to be the second highest degree of growth during the assessment of spiritual growth.

Degree of Awareness Acquired After Training

The assessment of the awareness acquired of the participants is listed; the assessment of the spiritual needs is displayed by the side for reference (see table 5.11).

Questions of assessment 1 to 8 refer to the training themes as designed in response to the spiritual needs (see appendix A).

Table 5.11. Assessment of the Awareness Acquired (see appendix M)

Spiritual Needs (Rank 1 to 7)	Group			Item \bar{X}	
	1	2	3		
Shadow Performing Leader	4.2	4.6	4.0	4.3	4.7
	5.7	5.8	4.0	5.2	
Wounds UnHelped Helper	3.2	3.8	3.0	3.3	3.7
	3.6	3.4	5.0	4.0	
Grace Self-Focused Survivor	3.4	3.4	3.8	3.5	4.3
	5.0	5.2	4.8	5.0	
Vocation Trapped Identity	4.4	3.0	4.6	4.0	3.8
	3.2	3.4	4.2	3.6	
Group \bar{X}	4.1	4.1	4.2		
Grand Average				4.1	

Awareness Acquired After Training (Rank from 1 to 7)	Group			Item \bar{X}	
	1	2	3		
1 Repeated patterns hindrance	6.4	6.0	5.8	6.1	6.0
2 Repeated sins hindrance	6.0	6.0	5.6	5.9	
3 God shares my deep hurts	5.4	6.2	5.2	5.6	5.6
4 God dissolve my grief	6.0	5.8	5.0	5.6	
5 Trail of God's grace in life	5.6	6.0	5.2	5.6	5.7
6 Grace embrace life	6.2	5.8	5.4	5.8	
7 Compassion for others	5.4	6.1	6.0	5.8	5.4
8 Gifts match my serving	5.0	4.4	5.4	4.9	
Group Average	5.8	5.8	5.5		
Grand Average				5.7	

All the scorings by people groups are above the median 4.0; the grand average is 5.7 (81% of the full score), and nearly all the item averages except 8 (4.9) are 5.6 or above (80%); it reflects a high level of awareness acquired among the participants.

Among the item averages of awareness acquired which are above the grand average, 1 (6.1), 2 (5.9), 6 (5.8), and 7 (5.8), the corresponding item averages of spiritual needs identified (4.3, 5.2, 5.0, 4.0) also go beyond or are close to the grand average (4.1). And among the item averages of awareness acquired which are below the grand average, 3 (5.6), 4 (5.6), 5 (5.6), and 8 (4.9), the corresponding item averages of spiritual needs identified (3.3, 4.0, 3.5, 4.0) also go below the grand average (4.1). The better

the participants can recognize their spiritual needs during the training, the more motivated and attentive they can be in acquiring the awareness the training themes aim to deliver.

The first and second highest awareness acquired by item average are 1 (6.1) and 2 (5.9) under Shadow, about repeated patterns and repeated sins that hinder the prosperity of life. They point to the concern about the wellness of oneself. The third highest is 6 (5.8) as well as 7 (5.8), where 6 is under Grace (about embracing others), and 7 is under Vocation (about compassion for others). These items point to the wellness of others rather than oneself. The fourth is 3 (5.6), 4 (5.6), and 5 (5.6), where 3 and 4 are under Wounds (about God coming to share and settle the grief), and 5 is under Grace (about seeing God in life). These items point to a life that needs embracing from God. These levels of awareness display a priority of preference from wellness of oneself to wellness of others rather than oneself, and eventually to the wellness that only God can provide.

Effect of Spiritual Growth After Training

The assessment of spiritual growth with before and after, as well as the degree of growth, is listed (see table 5.12). The abbreviation of S stands for Shadow, W for Wounds, G for Grace, and V for Vocation. The assessment of the awareness acquired is also displayed at the bottom for reference (see table 5.12). The grand average of the degree of growth is 1.3, with 10 out of the 12 assessed items having growth beyond a full rank (1.0) of measurement.

Table 5.12. Assessment of the Spiritual Growth (see appendix N)

Spiritual Growth (from 1 to 7)	Before					After					Growth				
	S	W	G	V	\bar{X}	S	W	G	V	\bar{X}	S	W	G	V	\bar{X}
Relational	3.4	3.5	4.3	4.2	3.9	5.1	4.8	5.1	5.4	5.1	1.7	1.3	0.8	1.2	1.3
Transformational	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.4	4.3	5.8	5.7	4.9	5.5	5.5	1.4	1.3	0.8	1.2	1.2
Missional	3.6	3.3	4.2	4.1	3.8	5.3	4.9	5.6	5.1	5.2	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.1	1.4
Sphere Average	3.8	3.7	4.2	4.2		5.4	5.1	5.2	5.3		1.6	1.4	1.0	1.1	
Grand Average					4.0					5.3					1.3
Awareness Acquired															
6.0 5.6 5.7 5.4															

The highest degree of growth among the SLD spheres is Shadow (1.6) with all three areas of relational (1.7), transformational (1.4), and missional (1.8) going beyond the grand average of growth (1.3). Shadow has the second lowest before training scoring (3.8), the highest after training scoring (5.4), and the greatest degree of growth scoring (1.6); apparently, Shadow is the main theme of spiritual life development among the participants.

The second degree of growth is Wounds (1.4). Wounds has the lowest before training scoring (3.7), the second highest degree-of-growth scoring (1.4), with the after training scoring (5.1) leveled out at that of Grace (5.2) and Vocation (5.3). Wounds is identified by the participants as the least important spiritual needs characteristics as well as the one with the least awareness acquired after training, Wounds turns out to be a more important theme than that of Grace and Vocation when it comes to actual spiritual growth.

The third degree of growth is either Vocation (1.1) or Grace (1.0). While both the before training scorings of Vocation (4.2) and Grace (4.2) are already above the

before training grand average (4.0), although the degree of growth is not as outstanding, the after training scoring is still good for Grace (5.2) and Vocation (5.3). The only difference is the degree of growth across the three areas of Vocation (1.2, 1.2, 1.1); it is more consistent than that of Grace (0.8, 0.8, 1.4).

Among the three areas of spiritual growth, the highest degree of growth is 1.4 of missional with obvious growth in the areas of Shadow (1.8), Wounds (1.6), and Grace (1.4). Vocation (1.1) looks not as high is because the room for growth is not as much, as the initial before training scoring is already at a high level (4.1). The assessment of the missional spiritual growth is based on the Beatitude model as discussed in this thesis-project, which implies all of the four spheres of the SLD framework displayed an encouraging promotion toward missional discipleship development.

The two main themes for spiritual life development are Shadow and Wounds; second is Vocation and third is Grace. With missional growth standing out, the project is effective in promoting a spiritual progress toward missional discipleship.

Delivery of Spiritual Life Development

Spiritual life development is evaluated by referring to the “growth evaluation” set of questions B to F. It includes the whole process of spiritual life development from the spiritual needs before training, to the awareness acquired after training, and the degree of growth of the three categories spiritual growth (relational, transformational, and missional). Below is an assessment by each sphere of the SLD spheres, and the score is highlighted if ever the scoring gets higher than the grand average.

Spiritual Life Development of Shadow

The participants are very focused on going through the spiritual life development of Shadow (see table 5.13); the scorings of the spiritual needs before training (4.3 and 5.2), the scorings of awareness acquired after training (6.1 and 5.9), and the degree of growth for the three categories of spiritual growth (1.6) are all among the highest.

Table 5.13. Assessment of the SLD Sphere Shadow

Shadow (Rank from 1 low to 7 high)		Before	After	Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Enjoy in necessary role to delivery	4.3			
	2 Not recognize where life moves to	5.2			
Awareness Acquired	3 Repeated patterns that hinder life		6.1		
	4 Repeated sins that hinder life		5.9		
Relational Growth	5 Understanding of Self	3.7	5.5	1.8	1.7
	6 Appreciation toward Self	3.1	4.7	1.6	
Transformational Growth	7 Share myself truthfully and fully	4.4	5.8	1.4	1.4
	8 Life integrates inside out	4.5	5.9	1.4	
Missional Growth	9 To do with my repeated problems	3.6	5.4	1.8	1.8
	10 World starts resting on an order	3.5	5.2	1.7	
Grand Average		3.8	5.4	1.6	

As Shadow is among one of the lowest scorings before training and obtained the highest scoring after training for all three areas of spiritual growth, it displays not only the persistent motivation throughout the training but also the stunning attainment the participants have gained in Shadow.

When all spiritual growth is taken in a sequence from the highest to the lowest degree of growth (5, 9, 10, 6, 8, 7), a glimpse of the spiritual life development is obtained. It begins with gaining more understanding of oneself (5), in particular reflecting on the repeated problems in life (9). One can become more free and joyful when the true self can be vitalized (10), and with the increase in appreciation of who one really is (6), life is becoming more integrated inside out (8), allowing one to share truthfully and fully (7).

Shadow in response to the spiritual needs of a performing leader has become the main theme of spiritual life development for the participants in 2017. The challenge to continue resides not in the area of proven growth, but the area where the growth is lesser; 6 has the lowest scoring of 4.7 after training. It is the appreciation of oneself, which is related to the values how one perceives a person as important in the sight of God. Further spiritual renewal is required in this aspect.

Spiritual Life Development of Wounds

The participants belittle their spiritual needs of Wounds, which turned out to be one of their most needed areas of spiritual life development. On one side, the scoring of spiritual needs before training is among the relatively lowest (3.3 and 4.0), and the scoring of awareness after training (5.6) is only on the average; on the other side, the degree of growth (1.4) is the second most effective (see table 5.14).

Although the participants as unhelped may be helpless in recognizing their spiritual needs of Wounds, the urge toward healing and recovery from the unfulfilled developmental memories caught up the momentum. The scoring of the degree of

growth is among the lowest before training and eventually leveled out with that of Grace and Vocation after training.

Table 5.14. Assessment of the SLD Sphere Wounds

Wounds (Rank from 1 low to 7 high)		Before	After	Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Put aside emotions and struggles	3.3			
	2 Not content with whom I am	4.0			
Awareness Acquired	3 God share my hurts and pains		5.6		
	4 God dissolve my unsettle grief		5.6		
Relational Growth	5 Understanding of parents	3.5	4.9	1.4	1.3
	6 Ties with parents	3.5	4.7	1.2	
Transformational Growth	7 Can forgive cause of misfortune	4.3	5.7	1.4	1.3
	8 More a lovingly person of God	4.4	5.6	1.2	
Missional Growth	9 Get closer to whom I will become	3.5	5.2	1.7	1.6
	10 At peace with those in conflict	3.3	4.7	1.4	
Grand Average		3.7	5.1	1.4	

When all the spiritual growth is taken in a sequence from the highest to the lowest degree of growth (9, 7, 5, 10, 8, 6), a glimpse of the spiritual life development is obtained. It begins with a closer understanding of who one is expecting of life (9), motivation to seek healing from the past and freedom from the trap of misfortune in life (7), resulting with a deeper understanding with those close ones who may have contributed the causes (5). This understanding makes possible the reconciliation between these subtle conflicts (10). Under the affirmation that one is a loving person

of God and embraced by the community of God's people (8), one reconnects with those who are supposed to be intimately close (6).

Wounds in response to the spiritual needs of an unhelped helper have become another important main theme of spiritual life development for the participants in 2017. The challenge continues with the area of lesser growth in recovering from the broken connection in the family (6), as it is only a beginning due to the increase in understandings (5), where both after training scoring of 6 (4.7) and 5 (4.9) still have room for enrichment.

Spiritual Life Development of Grace

The participants take the spiritual life development of Grace as secondary, where the scorings of the spiritual needs before training (3.5 and 5.0) and the scorings of awareness acquired after training (5.6 and 5.8) are among the second highest, while the scorings for the degree of growth (1.0) is also the third effective (see table 5.15).

The degree of growth is relatively moderate, partly because the initial scoring before training is already at a good status (4.2). Unless there is a substantial shift of paradigm in understanding the wonderfulness of God's grace, the growth will stay at a plateau for the time being.

When all the spiritual growth is taken in a sequence from the highest to the lowest degree of growth (9, 10, 8, 5, 6, 7), a glimpse of the spiritual life development is obtained. It begins with recognizing God has provided many possibilities for life (9), allows sufficiency in sharing with others (10), reverts the focus of life from oneself solely (8) to include others to participate altogether (5), and calls for an openness

and truthfulness to connect (6), confronting the narrow-heartedness of pride to transform (7).

Table 5.15. Assessment of the SLD Sphere Grace

Grace (Rank from 1 low to 7 high)		Before	After	Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Focus on own interest	3.5			
	2 Life is too narrow focus on myself	5.0			
Awareness Acquired	3 Trails of God's grace in my life		5.6		
	4 Grace help me to embrace others		5.8		
Relational Growth	5 Connection with others	3.9	4.9	1.0	0.8
	6 Truthfulness with others	4.8	5.4	0.6	
Transformational Growth	7 See narrow-heartedness of pride	3.8	4.3	0.5	0.8
	8 Focus on my story is not just me	4.4	5.5	1.1	
Missional Growth	9 Life has many alternatives in God	4.2	5.6	1.4	1.4
	10 Much more to share with others	4.3	5.6	1.3	
Grand Average		4.2	5.2	1.0	

Grace in response to the spiritual needs of a self-focused survivor has become the auxiliary theme of spiritual life development for the participants in 2017. The challenge remains with self-focused pride, as indicated in 7 with the lowest degree-of-growth (0.5); the narrow-heartedness of pride is the firm boundary that separates oneself from itself as well as others.

Spiritual Life Development of Vocation

Some participants bypassed the spiritual needs of Vocation, but some focused on going through spiritual life development (see table 5.16); some see the need (4.6

in 1 of group 3 and 4.4 of group 1) but some not (2.4 in 1 of group 2), and some are much more aware (6.1 in 3 of group 2 and 6.0 of group 3) than others (5.4 in 3 of group 1).

Table 5.16. Assessment of the SLD Sphere Vocation

Vocation (Rank from 1 low to 7 high)		Before		After		Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Feel empty after serve	4.4	2.4	4.6	3.7		
	2 Know not role and purpose	3.2	3.4	4.2			
Awareness Acquired	3 Have compassion for others			5.4	6.1	6.0	
	4 Gifts match with what I serve			5.0	4.4	5.4	
Relational Growth	5 Appreciation toward life	4.0		5.3		1.3	
	6 Desire for vision of life	4.7		5.9		1.2	1.3
	7 Knowing what's walking with Jesus	3.5		4.8		1.3	
	8 Passion for walking with Jesus	4.4		5.3		0.9	1.1
Transformational Growth	9 Need focus to pursuit calling	4.2		5.7		1.5	
	10 Excited with God's mission	4.5		5.3		0.8	1.2
Missional Growth	11 What is right to stand for	4.3		5.1		0.8	
	12 Am willing to pay the costs	3.9		5.2		1.3	1.1
Grand Average		4.2		5.3		1.1	

Apparently, it is very much related to the stage of life of the participants, where some are still studying while others have already become working adults. The overall scoring is 5.4 of awareness acquired, which shows the participants are motivated to explore and know more about Vocation.

Although there are flips and flops with intentions and motivations, the participants gradually come to realize Vocation is nevertheless an important aspect particularly at their current stage of life transition. The degree of growth has gradually taken momentum,

and all the three areas of the after training scorings (see table 5.12) — relational (5.4), transformational (5.5), missional (5.1) — are leveled off with the grand average (5.3).

When all the spiritual growth is taken in a sequence from the highest to the lowest degree of growth (9, 5, 7, 12, 6, 8, 10, 11), a glimpse of the spiritual life development is obtained. It begins with realizing there is a calling to focus on (9) and a life to appreciate (5); knowing what it means to walk with Jesus (7) and being willing to pay the costs (12); progressively developing a desire for a vision (6), a passion for Jesus (8), and an excitement for God's mission (10). Eventually one is willing to stand for one's faith seeing what is supposed to be right (11).

Vocation in response to the spiritual needs of a trapped identity has become an important forward-looking pointer to the spiritual life development for the participants in 2017. Being able to stand firm in one's faith is related to how one realizes the calling in God's mission. The challenges remain with developing the material content of one's passions (10) and undertaking the commitment necessary toward Christ's calling (11), where the participants have shown deficiency as of their degree of growth (0.8) for the time being, which would require an effort of a lifetime to comprehend.

Summary of the Assessment

The assessment indicates the participants are attracted to the themes of the SLD framework (Shadow, Wounds, Grace, and Vocation), in response to their spiritual needs (performing leader, unhelped helper, self-focused survivor, and trapped identity).

Shadow and Wounds are found to be the dual primary themes for the participants. On the one hand, the participants are very focused on going through

the spiritual development of Shadow, displaying all the motivated desires trying to get over the obstacles identified as repeated patterns in lives. On the other hand, lacking the initial intention to open up long unhelped bruises, the participants are surprised with the therapeutic understanding and soulful comfort when the unsettled emotions are being attended to. Grace is the secondary theme of preference, where there is awareness to reposition one's focus toward others, enlightening the participants to realize the way forward for broader prosperity is to realize God's guidance and provision in one's life as well as those around them. The attention to Vocation varies with different participants, as some are more motivated toward their future, while others are still engaged with their here-and-now status. Nevertheless, the participants gradually picked up the momentum during the latter half of the project, as Vocation is an essential part of spiritual life development in provoking life to advance.

The spiritual growth of the participants show a profound transformation in values and worldview in term of comprehending life authentically in order to live with wisdom; realizing the present of God in the life history so as to conceive life differently; embracing a community to experience the grace fully; and living out a life that is worth for its calling. According to the assessments, through the spiritual journey of confronting one's repeated pattern, unsettled wounds, self-focused narrowness, and trapped purposes in life, the participants have advanced their life many steps further.

Assessment of the Texture of the SLD Framework

The assessment refers to the qualitative assessment tool such that qualitative data in 2016 and 2017 are collected for analysis. The scope of the assessment will

cover from the thematic expression of each of the SLD quadrants for all participants in 2016, and the narrative description of each of the SLD quadrants for selected participants in 2017. The purpose is to identify the texture of the spiritual growth of each of the SLD quadrants and try to identify the spiritual growth marker for the SLD framework.

Thematic Expression of 2016

The evaluation refers to the thematic expression of the qualitative assessment tools. The assessment involves three steps: identify the themes to sort out the expressions of spiritual growth, gather the expressions of the participants into the categories of the four quadrants, analyze the codes within each expression, and group them to identify the trail of spiritual life development. Four themes are identified as listed below with specific bullet markers:

- ✓ What has one **discovered**? Training session 14, review and pre-camp, when reviewing learning throughout the process.
- ◎ What has one **reflected** on life? Training session 17, overnight camp consolidation, when debriefing the camp experiences.
- ➡ What kind of life is **looking forward**? Training session 18, rite of passage preparation, when finishing the drawing of a mask and giving a title to it. (Refer to appendix P, “Mask Drawing of 2016,” for details.)
- * What attitude of life is **taking forward**? Training session 20, overall review and evaluation, when each participant shares a final word.

The lists below summarize the expressions of the qualitative data gathered in 2016. They are categorized by the four SLD quadrants. The specific bullet markers correspond to the four themes identified for assessment; responses are grouped by the same code of characteristics as indicated in the parentheses.

Thematic Expression of Shadow

(Be Authentic)

- ✓ just be content with oneself; pretending to be confident is unnecessary
- ➡ live authentically: break through the frames, outflow the colors of life
- ➡ inside out: keep your heart clean, be authentic to the Lord, trust in him
- * learn not to mind what others say, be authentic to encounter one's true side
- * learn to be more authentic; speak directly instead of beating around the bush
- * need to move out of the comfort zone and try to express more of one's feelings

(Contemplate Life)

- ✓ what matters is not completing a task but reflecting the disturbances inside
- ◎ do not rush into the thing but reflect anew
- ➡ explore: solitude allows a time of meditation and reflection
- ➡ a third-person me: life is like a set of scattered dots
- * review life seriously, hold tight with God's guidance, and take courage to be transformed

(Aware of Struggles)

- ✓ a step at a time
- ◎ accept my ways may be wrong
- ➡ still struggling: even in Christ, temptation still comes, and go astray sometimes
- ➡ change and evolve: perseverance is to overcome shadow and surpass loneliness

The textures of Shadow are to be authentic with oneself, be able to reflect and be aware in order to integrate the fragmented stories of life into one meaningful whole in such a way as to find contentment in the Lord during the process, and no more to act out for the sake of others.

Thematic Expression of Wounds

(Embrace Life)

- ✓ no more running away from the problem
- what's insecure still felt as unsafe but now with a different outlook
- embrace fear and difficulties just like nature embraces us
- ➡ speechless: unspeakable impressions inside
- * not accepting oneself has prevented me from moving life forward
- * learn more to embrace what seems not perfect
- * want to pursue the real completeness instead of perfection
- * fears and struggles are positive to help me know God and myself more

(Realize Past History)

- what's behind you can be a lot more beautiful and meaningful
- all the past experiences contribute to who I am and what I can do as of now
- * discover how the acquired low self-esteem and self-negation are formed
- * important to know one's past in order to progress toward a life of oneself
- * seeing others going through their struggles encourages one to walk through my own

(Differentiate Self)

- ✓ learn not to depend on others to do it for you
- ✓ not to care so much about what others think and find a difference in oneself
- * learn not to be captured by fear and be able to speak up about opinions and feelings
- * take active response in life and no more being frightened off due to low esteem

(Recognize Divine Footstep)

- ➡ bewildered: lost, astray, through God find a way
- ➡ I can see now: he is leading the way, the very work of God

The textures of Wounds are to embrace fears and struggles in life, and not run away from the problem or depend on one's parents to solve them. Instead, one discovers grace to allow the wounds be healed and to surpass loneliness in life, to capture what one has experienced in the past which contributed to who one is, such that one can gradually recover and take an active response in it.

Thematic Expression of Grace

(Realize Sufficiency)

- learn not to depend on one's strength
- fear of being trapped, but togetherness helps me to be free from self-containment
- * learn not to depend on oneself solely; need to turn also to others and God
- ➡ together with you: though the road is long, even in darkness there is light
- ➡ undercover: the color under the veil
- ➡ lost and found: up and down in life, reflect upon life, colors of life always along

(Turn Otherness)

- ✓ the things not my own choice, but I still need to work on them for others' sake
- ✓ learn to trust those around
- need to take part and be compassionate to others in order to enjoy
- seeing through others helps me to expand my understanding of God
- ➡ prodigal return: previously as a slacker it stings, now love God and my neighbor
- * learn to see life from a different angle through other people's point of view
- * learn to appreciate oneself in the Lord and help others irrespective of limitation

(Refocus Life)

- ✓ wait too long will shift the focus
- ➡ superhero: all along I see powers I possess till I realize abilities are from God
- ➡ thread of mind: reflect fragmented emotions, reintegrate the thread of mind
- * provides a platform for me to be able to draw closer to myself and God
- * be opened to people and see from God's eyes rather than stubbornness in my own world

The textures of Grace are to trust others and learn to consider from their perspectives. In such a way, one can share their lives and becoming compassionate to them, as self-containment is always a dead end while open to others and God can bring liberation. Though sometimes one may lose one's way and the darkness is deep, light is there from above, and colors of life marked from within can always be discovered under the veil.

Thematic Expression of Vocation

(Purposeful Life)

- enjoying the process of the camp is just the same way to enjoy life
- ➡ exit: inside a labyrinth, follow you closely, I will
- * commit to doing things right away rather than previously having low motivation
- * need to have perspective about what life need to progress to and what I need to do

(Future Outlook)

- ✓ step out and try to see more
- ✓ it is a surprise to recognize one's potential
- ➡ freedom: the little one desire to be freed
- ➡ moment of maturity: I find my way
- * help me to look at life from multiple angles

(Faith in God)

- ✓ lean on the Lord and not the rock climbing wall
- ✓ depend on God particularly at a time people see as impossible
- ✓ focus on God instead of the situation
- need to build confidence in God
- be joyful even in difficult times

(Missional Disciple)

- the adventure abseiling reminds one needs to let go to become a disciple
- * learn about myself and God more to locate where life should be placed
- * take life seriously and share learnings with other second-generation youth
- * Be more ready to speak out one's identity as a Christian
- * doing background work is a call to be a faithful helper and servant leadership

The textures of Vocation as purposeful is to explore life and to discover one's potential, to step out from one's labyrinth, to lead by a desire to follow what one has been created for. Gradually one can move on and find the way out. And the textures of Vocation as missional are to allow one's life to be focused on God instead of the opinion of others or the demands from those around one. Gradually one finds out the ultimate identity is in Christ and his mission to the world.

Narrative Description of 2017

Among the assessment of awareness acquired (see table 5.17), there are five participants who are the top five as well as the only five whose total on awareness acquired of all SLD spheres goes beyond the total average. These participants are 15, 21, 24, 33, and 35.

Table 5.17. Awareness Acquired by Participant (see appendix M)

	SLD Sphere	Awareness Acquired by Individual Participant															Item \bar{X}	Total \bar{X}
		I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I21	I22	I23	I24	I25	I31	I32	I33	I34	I35		
1	Shadow	6	6	6	7	7	6	6	5	7	6	6	5	5	6	7	6.1	
2		6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	7	6	7	5	5	6	5	5.9	
3	Wound	6	5	5	5	6	7	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	3	6	5.6	
4		6	7	5	6	6	7	6	6	6	4	5	5	7	2	6	5.6	
5	Grace	5	6	5	5	6	7	5	6	7	5	5	6	6	3	6	5.5	
6		6	6	6	7	6	6	5	5	7	6	6	7	6	2	6	5.8	
7	Vocation	6	5	6	3	7	5	5.5	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	5.8	
8		5	4	6	4	6	4	5	4	7	2	6	6	6	4	5	4.9	
Total		46	45	45	43	50	48	45	44	54	41	46	46	47	32	47		46

The summary of spiritual life development characteristics of these selected participants by individual SLD sphere is listed (see table 5.18). This summary includes the whole process of spiritual life development, from the spiritual needs before training, to the awareness acquired after training, and the degree of growth of the three spiritual growth categories: relational, transformational, and missional. The individual interviews (see appendix Q) with the selected participants will be referenced during the narrative description.

Table 5.18. Summary of SLD Statistics of the Selected Participants

SLD		Year 2017 Selected Participant by SLD Quadrant																				Item X̄
		Shadow					Wound					Grace					Vocation					
		15	21	24	33	35	15	21	24	33	35	15	21	24	33	35	15	21	24	33	35	
I	Spiritual Needs	5	3	6	5	3	4	3	7	3	3	5	2	6	3	4	4	5	6	6	4	4.4
2		2	4	3	3	4	2	6	5	3	5	2	2	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	3.5
3	Awareness Acquired	7	6	7	5	7	6	7	6	6	6	7	7	7	6	6	7	5	7	6	6	6.4
4		6	6	7	5	5	6	7	6	7	6	6	6	7	6	6	6	4	7	6	5	6.0
5	Relational Growth	5	5	6	5	6	6	5	6	6	5	5	5	6	4	5	6	7	6	5	5	5.5
6		5	5	6	5	5	5	5	6	7	4	5	6	6	5	4	6	7	7	4	5	5.4
7	Relational Growth (w/Christ)																5	5	7	3	5	5.0
8																	6	7	7	5	5	6.0
9	Transform- ational Growth	6	6	7	5	6	5	6	7	6	5	5	6	5	6	5	7	6	7	6	4	5.8
10		6	7	7	5	6	6	7	7	6	5	5	7	6	5	5	6	6	7	5	4	5.9
11	Missional Growth	5	6	7	6	5	6	7	7	7	4	6	6	7	5	4	6	6	6	5	4	5.8
12		5	7	7	6	5	5	5	6	6	4	7	7	7	5	4	6	7	7	4	4	5.7
Total		32	36	40	32	33	33	35	39	38	27	33	37	37	30	27	48	51	54	37	36	
X̄ of Total		35					34					33					45					

Participant 35 is selected for Shadow. The participant had a low recognition of spiritual needs before training (3.0 and 4.0), a high scoring of awareness acquired after training (7.0 and 5.0), but only ordinary spiritual growth after training (33). It is not the outstanding spiritual life development statistics that attracted the researcher to select this participant, but the explicit verbal expression of spiritual growth during training session 19 (ritual of passage).

Participant 33 is selected for Wounds. The participant has a low recognition of spiritual needs before training (3.0), yet a high scoring of awareness acquired after training

(6.0 and 7.0), resulting in the second-highest spiritual growth after training (38). The participant had an initial low recognition of spiritual need but high spiritual growth, and so this narrative is an obvious one for Wound.

Participant 21 is selected for Grace. The participant had a low recognition of spiritual needs before training (2.0), yet a high scoring of awareness acquired after training (7.0 and 6.0), resulting in the highest spiritual growth after training (37) among all the selected participants under Grace. Moreover, Participant 21 had the lowest scoring (refer to appendix K) with each item below the median 4.0 level, showing no empty-self characteristics. It would be interesting to explore why one without empty-self characteristics is opened to the needs of spiritual life development of Grace.

Participant 15 is selected for Vocation (Purposeful). The participant had an average recognition of spiritual needs before training (4.0), yet a high scoring of awareness acquired after training (7.0 and 6.0), resulting in an above-average spiritual growth after training (4.8). Moreover, this participant has the lowest scoring (refer to appendix K) with all items beyond the median 4.0 level. It would be interesting to explore why one with strong empty-self characteristics is related to the spiritual growth of Purposeful Vocation.

Participant 24 is selected for Vocation (Mission). The participant had the highest scoring (7.0) compared with the other selected participants among the “relational growth with Christ” in 7 and 8. The participant also displays the highest total scoring of spiritual growth (54) among all the selected participants; more likely to advance life to a different level.

Narrative Description of Shadow

The summary of the SLD of Participant 35 under Shadow is listed (see table 5.19). Before YLT, Participant 35 ranks oneself very low in self-understanding (5 before is 2.0), and low esteem with confusing identity (6 before is 1.0); thus, the low scoring in spiritual needs is due to the lack of recognition of one's identity. After YLT, the growth is significant with a high degree of growth in self-understanding (5's growth is 3.0) and appreciation (6's growth is 3.0), and a better understanding of one's repeated patterns in becoming more integrated with life inside out.

Table 5.19. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 35

Spiritual Life Development of 35		Before	After	Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Enjoy in necessary role to delivery	3			
	2 Not aware where life moves to	4			
Awareness Acquired	3 Repeated patterns that hinder life		7		
	4 Repeated sins that hinder life		5		
Relation Growth	5 Understanding of self	2.0	5.0	3.0	3.0
	6 Appreciation toward self	1.0	4.0	3.0	
Personal Growth	7 Share myself truthfully and fully	3.0	5.0	2.0	2.0
	8 Life integrates inside out	3.0	5.0	2.0	
Missional Growth	9 To do with my repeat problems	3.0	4.0	1.0	1.0
	10 World starts resting on an order	3.0	4.0	1.0	
Grand Average		2.5	4.5	2.0	

Participant 35 comes from a traditional family where the image of a father is the supreme reference of behaving and performing. Participant 35 built up fear of

authority and a repeated pattern¹ of running away from performing according to the expectations of authoritative figures. The training programs help her to reflect on life, and she comes to realize her past experiences with her earthly father are the source of these feelings of helplessness. Such a realization allows her to understand the forces behind her feelings, bring forward a new coping skill in life, and a new perspective toward her father. Together with a successful experience of facing certain adventure challenges, the opportunity to decide on choices allows Participant 35 to realize one needs to make a call for oneself. Subsequently, it opens up further for Participant 35 to choose to reposition one's role in ministry and work toward the calling that is a better fit.

The texture of Participant 35 for Shadow is to be real with oneself; to become aware of one's repeated pattern as of here and now; to allow oneself to contemplate the trail of influence the patterns have had in life; to come to terms with the cause where it first began; to realize the flight is not to put away the shadow but to transform it; and ultimately life is to be reconnected with purposes and meanings once the clouds are clear. In the end, it is about Participant 35's discovery of the repeated pattern, recovering from stagnancy, and revitalizing with the image of God shining through in life.

Narrative Description of Wounds

The summary of the SLD of Participant 33 under Wounds is listed (see table 5.20). Before YLT, Participant 33 scores oneself very low in connection with family (5 before is 2.0) and ties with closest kin (6 before is 3.0) and is filled with sourness

¹ Words or phrases that are underlined indicate matters that are quintessential in each sphere.

and unsettling emotions. In this respect, the low scoring in spiritual needs (1 and 2 are 3.0) implies one does not recognize the grief inside. After YLT, Participant 33 is drawn closer to the family with better embrace of the past; 5, 6, and 7 show growth at 3.0, and Participant 33 is also drawn closer to oneself in embracing deeper the person whom one is (10's growth is 3.0).

Table 5.20. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 33

Spiritual Life Development of 33		Before	After	Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Put aside emotions and struggles	3.0			
	2 Not content with whom I am	3.0			
Awareness Acquired	3 God share my hurts and pains		6.0		
	4 God dissolve my unsettle grief		7.0		
Relation Growth	5 Understanding of parents	2.0	5.0	3.0	3.0
	6 Ties toward parents	3.0	6.0	3.0	
Personal Growth	7 Can forgive cause of misfortune	2.0	5.0	3.0	2.0
	8 More a lovingly person of God	4.0	5.0	1.0	
Missional Growth	9 Get closer to whom I will become	4.0	6.0	2.0	2.5
	10 At peace with those in conflict	2.0	5.0	3.0	
Grand Average		2.8	6.0	2.5	

Participant 33 is a pastor's kid and has been brought up at church with many eyes on him; the expectation is that he needs to behave well. Participant 33 has been diagnosed with a learning disability and has been ridiculed by colleagues ever since. Though Participant 33 may be slow at things, he is responsive and sensitive and takes his life and others seriously. Participant 33 has a lot of inner tensions and unresolved

feelings toward his father. On one side, he is being picked at by his father on daily matters; on another side, the father's mumblings and complaints about church make him doubt the kind of holiness a pastor should have. During the training programs, it helps Participant 33 to realize he admires his father very much, and it is the projection of the ideal self that has brought all the disappointment. Further, in a prayer session with a mentor, he is encouraged that deep in his heart he has a servant's heart, and greatly touched by the prayer that God recognizes he is never a nobody. The total being of Participant 33 is rebuilt throughout the process of the training programs.

The texture of Participant 33 for Wounds is to be true with one's grief and unsettled emotions; not to take oneself as a victim but learn to embrace the reality and reconcile the brokenness; to realize many disturbances are related to unsatisfied desires of fulfillment which one needs to revisit, forgive, let go, and reconnect. In the end, it is Participant 33's awareness of one's developmental task that delivers him from the limitation of what seems he has been born with and rectifies unrealistic expectations of life. Thus, life can move on with the maturity to discover the differentiated self that one has in God.

Narrative Description of Grace

The summary of the SLD of Participant 21 under Grace is listed (see table 5.21). Before YLT, Participant 21 is fairly self-focused (5 before is 2.0), pretty narrow-minded (7 before is 3.0), and not connected with others (8 before is 3.0). After YLT, the growth is tremendous, and life is like an open sky with outstanding soaring across.

Table 5.21. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 21

Spiritual Life Development of 21		Before	After	Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Focus on own interest	4.0			
	2 Life is too narrow focus on myself	1.0			
Awareness Acquired	3 Trails of God's grace in my life		7.0		
	4 Grace help me to embrace others		6.0		
Relation Growth	5 Connection with others	2.0	5.0	3.0	2.0
	6 Truthfulness with others	5.0	6.0	1.0	
Personal Growth	7 See narrow-heartedness of pride	3.0	6.0	3.0	3.5
	8 Focus on my story is not just me	3.0	7.0	4.0	
Missional Growth	9 Life has many alternatives in God	4.0	6.0	2.0	2.5
	10 Much more to share with others	4.0	7.0	3.0	
Grand Average		3.5	6.2	2.7	

Participant 21 is from a grass-roots family and sometimes is uneasy being labeled as a weak lower class. From the training programs, Participant 21 realizes all lives are embraced in God, just as when a small potted plant back to nature, all things are equally nurtured under God's unconditional providence. Participant 21 is inspired that God creates this world not for the sake of survival for the fittest; that view is only the competitive character of humans who have twisted the interpretation. Participant 21 is in her first year of working. The training programs led her to think about her calling, and there came a moment of fear whether she can get hold of it. The training helps her to realize it is not solely about pursuing something satisfying or purposeful but about whom one is and is becoming.

Participant 21 also reflects upon her relationship with others and discovers that she has reservations toward people. Her relationship with her mother was once very close, but when her mother was diagnosed with mental illness years ago, suddenly the closeness was gone. And now, when Participant 21 tries to associate the word *intimacy*, all she can recall is fear. Surprisingly, it is during one of the training programs, a meditative session on peeling off onion skins layer by layer, that words and feelings which have long been forgotten suddenly come back to her. The long forgotten love language — merciful, gracious, loving-kindness, compassion, forgiving, embracing — are like gifts of God delivered once again. The training project is coming to an end, but Participant 21 sees it is only as a beginning, where her story will now continue with new perspectives.

The texture of Participant 21 for Grace is to be recovered from disconnection and distrust; to be reunited with the divine embrace of love and grace such that self-containment is released; to be liberated and to be revived with the gesture of mercy and the language of love, in such a way the doorway to others and God will gradually be reconnected. In the end, it is Participant 21's rediscovering of the grace and love of God; she is aware life is more than sufficient in God's respect, and with such a difference of realization, life is full of alternatives and possibilities.

Narrative Description of Vocation as Purposeful

The summary of the SLD of Participant 15 under Vocation (Purposeful) is listed (see table 5.22). Before YLT, Participant 15 desires to bring life forward purposefully (6 before is 5.0); reluctantly, Participant 15 is pretty helpless (2 before is 2.0) and reserved

(12 before is 2.0). After YLT, there is an increase in compassion with people (3's after is 7.0); and more so, the vision and direction become more focused (both 6's and 9's after are 6.0).

Table 5.22. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 15

Spiritual Life Development of 15		Before	After	Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Feel exhausted & empty after serve	5.0			
	2 Know not my role and purpose	2.0			
Awareness Acquired	3 Have compassion for certain people		7.0		
	4 Gifts match with what I serve		6.0		
Relation Growth	5 Appreciation toward life	4.0	5.0	1.0	1.0
	6 Desire for vision of life	5.0	6.0	1.0	
	7 Knowing what is walking with Jesus	2.0	4.0	2.0	2.0
	8 Passion for walking with Jesus	3.0	5.0	2.0	
Personal Growth	9 Need focus to pursuit calling	4.0	6.0	2.0	1.5
	10 Excited with God's mission	4.0	5.0	1.0	
Missional Growth	11 What is right to stand for	3.0	5.0	2.0	2.5
	12 Am willing to pay the costs	2.0	5.0	3.0	
Grand Average		3.4	5.1	1.7	

Participant 15 becomes quite individually self-focused in a good, nurturing family, and is too attached to the safety net. During the training programs, Participant 15 reviewed a few repeated patterns in life and came to an awareness that it is not about staying in or moving out of the comfort zone, it is the passivity he has unconsciously acquired. At the overnight camp during the training programs,

different levels of challenges are arranged for Participant 15, where he finished exceeding well beyond the level of difficulties. Participant 15 came to realize, all along it is a pattern of self-persuasion that he talked himself out and continued to bury himself in the soil. The training programs help him to affirm his sense of existence.

To get out of the comfort zone is one thing; where to go is another. Participant 15 is an outstanding Christian, longing to commit his footsteps wholeheartedly if he can confirm a pathway where God is leading him. Another most memorable teaching Participant 15 can recall during the training programs is about finding the path of life. The teaching reminds Participant 15 that the journey of life is never a straight line; rather, it is like a spiral circulating around certain themes, such that the storyline of life will gradually come forward. Participant 15 recalls his devotion to drama and comes to realize he will have to be responsible with his own life, take it or leave it, he will have to make the call and face the consequence. Participant 15 has generated new energy to take further steps forward in his life.

The texture of Participant 15 for Vocation as Purposeful is to discover the current status of stagnancy; to recognize the unwanted repeated situation one resides in; to feel the issues that one cannot continue so for rest of life; to be motivated in rediscovering the lost passion; and to identify the practical way forward. In the end, Participant 15, realizing how precious God has intended him to live a more abundant life, is motivated to release himself from his hideout and passivity, to continue his long missed theme of development to life.

Narrative Description Vocation as Missional

The summary of the SLD of Participant 24 under Vocation (Missional) is listed (see table 5.23). Participant 24 before YLT is already motivated to take life further (8, 11, and 12 before are all 6.0), but without a clear guidance of where and how to lay out the first step. After YLT, this participant had very positive feedback on the training and showed a tremendous amount of growth in which six out of the eight measuring items (6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12) give full scores of 7.0.

Table 5.23. Summary of SLD Statistics of Participant 24

Spiritual Life Development of 24		Before	After	Growth	
Spiritual Needs	1 Feel exhausted and empty after serve	2.0			
	2 Know not my role and purpose	1.0			
Awareness Acquired	3 Have compassion for certain people		7.0		
	4 Gifts match with what I serve		7.0		
Relation Growth	5 Appreciation toward life	4.0	6.0	2.0	2.5
	6 Desire for vision of life	4.0	7.0	3.0	
	7 Knowing what it is walking with Jesus	5.0	7.0	2.0	1.5
	8 Passion for walking with Jesus	6.0	7.0	1.0	
Personal Growth	9 Need focus to pursuit calling	5.0	7.0	2.0	2.0
	10 Excited with God’s mission	5.0	7.0	2.0	
Missional Growth	11 What is right to stand for	6.0	6.0	0.0	0.5
	12 Am willing to pay the costs	6.0	7.0	1.0	
Grand Average		5.1	6.8	1.7	

Participant 24 is a rational person and oriented toward problem solving; without a role to play at the beginning of the training, Participant 24 felt out of place. During the training programs outdoor stream trekking, Participant 24 came to realize if one never spends the time to reflect upon one's faith, it will be like walking the journey with the backpack on, knowing not what kind of load one is carrying.

Participant 24 begins to reflect his fear of shame and failure, that people will discover a flaw in him. When he goes deeper, Participant 24 found out it is not the fear of shame that matters; it is the fear of confrontation and fear of separation. His father passed away early, since then, his mother and brother are those who he can depend on, and he is afraid to lose hold of any one of them. He has to prove his worthiness; in this way, people will choose not to leave him. And things can get worse when these inner emotions of loss turn outward, trying to get hold of control to ensure the security is around. Surprisingly, when the training programs began the topic of vocation, then Participant 24 started to have a glimpse of what the focus of life could be, and suddenly, all these unnecessary conflicts inside him began to subside.

Participant 24 is at a crossroad: whether to spend more time at church or at work, whether certain participation justifies the time spent and whether it satisfies the soul. Now the Spirit calls him to turn from the attitude of a freelance volunteer to a whole-hearted stakeholder. Like map setting during the outdoor training program, such a sincere intention sets his path onward, helps him to focus on the right things, and clears unnecessary distraction where there used to be a lot. Participant 24 sets as

his interim goal and commitment to take care of the next generation at church, as a bridge to guide them toward the faith, just as he was being guided and being taken care of. With the fear subsiding and his path of life set, Participant 24 treasures more the community of authentic sharing and brotherhood of embrace in the Lord. The trail of life, people, ministries are all connected.

The texture of Participant 24 for Vocation (Missional) is initially occupied with a serving heart participating as a servant leader ministering to others; this orientation is not due to particular personal fulfillment but solely heartfelt friendliness to pour out; and a preference to embrace all things that are genuine and truthful. With an inward momentum to bring life to the next level, Participant 24 advances to recognize the conflicts in life and wants to reconcile; to turn from ways of going astray and from distorted thoughts; to become more focused on God instead of the measure of worthiness ascribed by others; and to begin putting things together with a vision and purpose. In the end, Participant 24 has moved from being a self-contained youth to a passionate, pathfinding visionary. He has shared the heart of God in a community, and is aware of a mission to respond to in life.

Summary of the Assessment

The spiritual needs of performing leader, unhelped helper, self-focused survivor, and trapped identity are evident and generic among the participants. Though each participant may have a focus on a particular SLD quadrant to begin with, the trail of their spiritual journey goes through all the quadrants and gradually moves on to the forward look of vocation. Common subject matters are apparent

among the four quadrants of the SLD framework, as was discovered during the narration from the participants. In Shadow, words or phrases such as authentic, truthfulness, integration of life events, or awareness of repeated patterns are common. In Wounds, such phrases as recall the memories, embrace the past, reconciliation, or reconnection recur. Contentment, unconditional, liberation, or reunion are common themes in Grace. In Vocation, motivated, refocusing, reignited, or advancing are emphasized. These subject matters converge into progressive spiritual growth (see the section Overview of the Spiritual Growth below) throughout spiritual life development.

The spiritual life development framework is relevant to the real experience of young leaders, particularly in response to the needs of their developmental stage and faith integration in a transition from self-focused, self-fulfilling youth to other-focused missional Christian leaders. SLD is not mainly about the affirmation of faith of Christian beliefs but about the personal experiences in being embraced in the community that emerged through the empathy of mercy and grace; in being restored to the authentic image that is created originally; and in being motivated toward a meaningful purpose to which God has been inviting one. SLD interwove the understanding of faith which has been contextualized, the guidance of the spiritual mentor which has been personalized, and the enlightenment of the presence of God which has been vitalized; in such a way, “wisdom will enter [their] heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to [their] soul (Prov 2:10) in the very circumstances of young leaders. SLD presents a basic framework which is generic to young leaders, yet with a spectrum of colors manifested in their life.

Overview of the Spiritual Growth

In response to the outcome assessment, the YLT project is effective in reflecting the essences of the SLD framework, and the SLD framework is well-suited in facilitating spiritual life development in respect to the spiritual needs of young leaders. The text that follows summarizes the spiritual growth characteristics of the spiritual life development of young leaders this thesis-project has initiated throughout the three-year project. There are two concerns: identity and home. Identity is in terms of finding one's worth and role to play; home is in term of the environment where such an identity is being discovered, as well as participating, to contribute value.

Shadow to Contemplate

Young leaders desire to engage in a role to perform and deliver a viable outcome; in such a way, to discover one's identity in the pathway of life. It is a process of exploration, where most of the time they seek affirmation from those significant others with the aim to model lives for some essential purposes. At the same time, unsettled developmental tasks or not yet having overcome self-indulgence, instead of bringing prosperity, have become negative driving forces in life. These unseen forces of shadow, together with the desire to perform, can drain life through repetitive and reactive responses, circling endlessly around in a barren land until all life energies are being absorbed.

One may recall the life of Saul in the Old Testament; he is in a repeated pattern concerning how people would look at him and how he should act appropriately in

front of the crowd. (1 Sam 9:21; 10:27; 13:11; 15:24, 30) In the end, Saul failed to find the appropriate priority in life and did not put God first, until one day he even lost his vocation as king.

It is essential for young leaders to be awakened from their shadow side and their usual way of performing; what Peterson interprets as blessed “when you are at the end of your rope” (Matt 5:3) is when one realizes what seems secure and purposeful may be impoverished. It is not easy to be awakened from what has long been rooted and dependent, as these patterns have become a way of life and survival. Not until young leaders are exhausted of their strength, drained of what they can strive for, will they begin to open up a higher sensitivity to experience the embracing Grace from God, to commence to be “care-full” in God, as described by Peterson.

One should start with the here and now. Be truthful with the present moment in recognizing the repeated patterns in life; learn to be authentic in relating to oneself as well as with God. Just as what Parker Palmer has described, “Our deepest calling is to grow into our authentic self-hood, whether or not it conforms to some image of who we ought to be.”² As people begin to do so, they will not only find the joy of vitalizing who they really are in Christ; they will also find their path of authentic service in the mission God has them for the world.

Wounds to Forget

The other matter of concern during spiritual life development is home, and the primary home where young leaders reside is family. Nowadays many essences of the

² Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 16.

family are disintegrating, and among those most critical for the wholistic development of young leaders is the prominent influence from a healthy parental image. Most young leaders grow up in an area of desolation, even though on the surface the soil seems good. Many of their struggles are due to unfulfilled developmental memories or confusing family values, in particular related to unpleasant or unexpected incidents with significant others. These hurts will create tensions within the inside world and can be ended with unconscious psychological protective mechanism or transference. With all the ministering young leaders do to assist others, their own needs have not been attended to.

The purgative way during spiritual formation involves a process of purifying the soul through confessions, renunciation, and contrition for disobedience. Young leaders, however, often need to purge away the wounds from being sinned against, wounds which have never really been forgotten. Just as Jim Davids highlights, “It becomes more subtle, as there are unconscious motives and reactive responses that need to [be brought] to the surface and renounced before God.”³ Further on in life, these not-yet-handled reactive forces of the wounds become stronger and subtler.

One may recall Joseph in the Old Testament, who may not be really letting go the griefs in life in naming his firstborn Manasseh.⁴ It is only when his brothers appear in front of him, refreshing all the turmoil he has gone through in life, that he summarized a breakthrough statement: “So it was not you who sent me here, but

³ Jim Davids, “Research on Spiritual Development,” Regent University Academics Affairs, accessed August 14, 2016, https://www.regent.edu/academics/academic_affairs/faculty_essentials/welcome/resources/Research_On_Spiritual_Development.pdf, 17.

⁴ “Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. ‘For,’ he said, ‘God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father’s house.’” (Gen 41:51)

God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.” (Gen 45:8) Joseph comes to realize the purpose of God and what he has been called for all through his life. This becomes the ground where Joseph can finally walk away from his wounds and griefs, not only fulfilling his vocation but also reconnecting with his past and family, making his life complete and whole.

Such a process of purgation, related to past experience in life, requires a journey of reconciliation before the sinned-against wounds can be forgotten; in such a way, the inside world can eventually be put right. It is an important process, as it can help young leaders to be able to disconnect from the wounds and clear the competing protective mechanisms or transference projection which have all along been associated. The divine presence of the all-embracing God becomes the ultimate affirmation and healing for young leaders, allowing them to differentiate from significant others, for an existence that is now grounded as the children of God as they discover their distinctive characteristics in Christ.

Grace to Remember

While young leaders are moving into an independent lifestyle of their own, their ego development and identity formation are also accelerating. When the ego became the center of the personality, it will strike for its interests and survival. Just as Jeffrey Arnett describes in *Emerging Adulthood*, “the goal of their self-focusing is self-sufficient, learning to stand alone as a self-sufficient person.”⁵ Emerging adults, by focusing on themselves, look forward to developing skills for daily living, to gaining a

⁵ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens Through the Twenties* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 13-14.

better understanding of who they are and what they want from life, and to building a foundation for their adult lives and identities. It is only when young leaders find contentment with oneself in Christ that they can relax from inadequacy and be able to open up and look beyond oneself. Such refocusing of concern will bring forward closer cooperation in relating than competition.

Jesus identifies the greatest commandment, which has two parts: love your God, and love your neighbor as yourself. (Matt 22:34-40) Self-giving love requires openness to others, as Miroslav Volf in *Exclusion and Embrace* points out: “It involves a willingness to embrace rather than exclude.”⁶ Love of others transcends narrow self-interest. Young leaders need to grow out of their ingrained disposition toward pride, selfishness, and narcissism, such that they can enlarge their hearts and widen their concerns to encompass what is beyond themselves. The more young leaders focus on loving others, the more they can lay aside their self-focused preference. And just as Scorgie mentions, “such openness in life can grow into a more generalized, instinctive, and dispositional response to life, and it is certainly true when it comes to loving God.”⁷

The aim is to take young leaders through a remembering and realizing process: remembering what they have gone through in life, and realizing what God has been doing in time and space. This process allows God to go deep into the human spirit, bringing contentment to young leaders, recognizing who they are and what they have been through. The more young leaders focus on realizing God, the less

⁶ Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 125.

⁷ Glen G. Scorgie and Kevin Reimer, “Spirituality in Community,” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 78.

they focus on their own hurts. The more they lay aside their self-focusedness, the more they come to see others in their lives.

Vocation to Act

These days, young leaders show signs of depression, anger, disappointment, and despair as they find it increasingly difficult to be involved in the established structure of their home church and home town. The reason behind this view is not solely because of the generational gap and cultural differences, but the immutable tradition and the subtle power structure in which young leaders ultimately do not want to have their life and identity be trapped.

Young leaders wish to be united with something passionate and missional, with a creative and righteous future outlook. They long for their lives to be able to resonate with an affectionate calling and be able to have companions walking along the same pathway instead of struggles with powers and authorities. They do see a necessity as the second leg in a relay among the Christian community where they reside; yet, they long to take goodness and righteousness forward primarily as of their own footsteps. With a deepening union with God in love, young leaders will necessarily engage with the world. As young leaders reside at the bottom of the social ladder, they recognize the destructive and dehumanizing worldview that misshapes human life. They will question perverted behavior patterns that cripple individuals and poison communities, and they will confront false values that warp and distort human activities and relationships.

Nonetheless, God is to be wanted; he must be wanted for himself and not for some lesser good that he can provide. It is never the enlightening passion nor intentional missions that will supply the ultimate gain in personal life. Paradoxically, just as Jim Davids mentions, the unitive way also is involved in a self-abandonment to Grace, “yielding to God through purified desire and simplified will, . . . a time of dryness and painful stripping away of the intellectual and emotional assurances of God’s presence and care, . . . detachment from self and a certitude of the indwelling presence of God.”⁸ It is a process of brokenness together with restoration for those who will to walk and commit to Jesus.

⁸ Davids, “Research on Spiritual Development,” 17.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Reflections on the Action

Key Focus of the Project

Many Christian youth programs are directed to particular objectives of the agenda of the church or organization, such as an ethical position, effectiveness in evangelism, a tradition of successor, a guardian of doctrinal faith, or a countercultural educational program. However, the concern of the Young Leader Training (YLT) project remains with the life of young leaders. The primary focus is here and now, relating to the spiritual needs of young leaders during their life transition from youth to young adult, as well as the spiritual relationship with oneself, others, and God.

The spiritual needs of young leaders are identified as the focus of attention in this thesis-project, which includes the performing leader, the unhelped helper, the self-focused survivor, and the trapped identity. These concerns are far more profound than the psychosocial definition of personalities, as it touches on the basic queries of the human spirit as discussed in chapter 1: who I am, why I am here, and where I am going? These three questions concern the being of the person, the meaning of life, and the passion for greater wellness, which are deeply spiritual questions. This program is anthropology-related, specific to human souls, and related to the creation mandate. If the importance of these factors are being ignored in the ministry, young leaders will easily be dehumanized into functional objects. Thus, the purpose of this thesis-project

is to respond to the spiritual formation gaps in the youth ministry in respect to the spiritual needs of young leaders. Such gaps have been inefficient in assisting young leaders in becoming fully alive to their true humanness as laid out in the image of God.

Throughout the three-year project, which is based on the same Spiritual Life Development (SLD) framework, it has become apparent that the critical issues with the participants are not the developmental or character-related issues. The issues are with their performing nature — that the participants are unconsciously working out an identity, looking to please others and gain credit for their work. In the end, these issues are related to their unhelped past. It is not lack of understanding of the faith and biblical knowledge; instead, it is the lack of transporting real life into the fullness of God's grace, revealing the richness of wisdom in the faith to capture one's true identity in God and the calling within the ambience in which God has placed them.

The objective is not merely the analysis of spiritual needs and designing the right programs to obtain positive spiritual growth for young leaders. Instead, the program is designed for young leaders, under the guidance of the Spirit, to discover themselves, and in identifying the pains and unsettled griefs in life, they are motivated to seek help and look for changes. It is through the process of discovery, encountering oneself in Christ occurs. It is the authenticity of humanness facilitated by the power of the Spirit that makes the momentum of discovery. And it is the love of God and his grace shedding the light of alternatives and hopes in Christ that make such a discovery possible.

Recommendation on Further Application

In *The Active Life*, Palmer mentions the wholeness of life includes the “Active Life” as well as the “Contemplative Life.”¹ These are the two inseparable but integrated polarities of a person who is fully alive, though people are typically drawn to either one at a time and alternate between them. For young leaders, the developmental life within the sphere of the developmental landscape is also involved, as young leaders are going through their formational stages of personality and character during the life review. Thus, there are three landscapes behind the spiritual life development of the young leader. One is related to the here and now as the reality of life awaits contemplative transformation. The other is related to the past as the developmental reality awaits remedy. And the third is related to the future as the calling of God awaits for active missional responses. Together these are the tri-polarities for a person to be fully alive.

The spiritual life development in this thesis-project covers a lot with the contemplative life as well as the developmental life; however, for the active life, it only covers the effectiveness in promoting spiritual life progress toward missional discipleship. Hence, on top of the inward journey of in-house training to facilitate the enrichment of contemplative life and developmental life, it would require an outward journey to facility the spiritual formation of the active life to complete the coverage for spiritual life development.

In the Bible, Christlikeness is a life of loving union with God, being so filled up that it will continue to pour out love for the sake of others. Christlikeness is

¹ Parker J. Palmer, *The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 17.

characterized by “compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another.” (Col 3:12-13) It is a life radically other-referenced for the well-being of the other; “count others more significant than yourselves, look not only to [your] own interests but also to the interests of others.” (Phil 2:3-4)

Selected participants from the previous three-year YLT project have been gathered into a trip to India in the late summer of 2017. Two places were visited: the spirituality of desperate pilgrims at the river banks of the Ganges in Varanasi, and the spirituality of servant leaders at the house of Mother Teresa in Kolkata. One is filled with the crowd of pilgrims rushing for all kind of blessings — whatever one can obtain from the goddesses — and the other with individual groups of volunteers gathering together for all the selfless servant hearts they can offer.

Without spiritual formation, an outward journey, like many short-term mission trips, run the risk of being merely social services or cultural projects, and those that focus on religious outreach activities run the risk of performance (looking for the number of conversions). Rather, the spiritual formation program is all about the identity as a Christian; in other words, the outward journey should be focused on understanding the deepest identity as children of God sent into the world to cooperate with the mission of God.

The spiritual life development of young leaders is focused not only on personal growth and flourishing, or else the end goal will be barely self-actualization or moral betterment; instead, it is to become oriented toward the mission in serving the world. The India trip is an illustration of the outward journey with the framework of the Beatitudes to continue as the spiritual life development of missional discipleship,

learning “to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.” (Mic 6:8)

Accents Throughout the Journey

Key Focus on Spirituality

Christian spirituality is about living all of life and not just some esoteric portion of it, and spiritual formation signals the importance of soul crafting as well as positive changes in the life of the believers. In this thesis-project, the concerns are specific in response to the spiritual formation gaps of young leaders, who display a disconnected life, a fragmented life, and a reduced missional life as distortions of the original design of the triune God.

There are perspectives and references to spirituality other than what have been discussed in this thesis-project. To name a few: Michael Downey,² representing a Roman Catholic perspective, Gordon Wakefield³ and Philip Sheldrake⁴ representing a Protestant perspective; Keith Beasley-Topliffe,⁵ representing the Wesleyan tradition; and much more. The discussion in this thesis-project may not fully consider the wealth of ecumenical resources to discern the orientation for spirituality; instead, it is the distinct heritage of grace-centered values, Christ-centered focus, and biblical-centered wisdom of evangelical spirituality that is highlighted.

² Michael Downey, *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1993).

³ Gordon Wakefield, *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1983).

⁴ Philip Sheldrake, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003).

⁵ Keith Beasley-Topliffe, *The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2017).

From a grace-centered perspective, there are three rectifications of spirituality that address the “Christian pathology report on the human condition.”⁶ First, humans are created for community, but sin produced alienation, thus leaving young leaders as functional helpers yet soulfully unhelped, and by his grace, the intimate relationship with God, oneself, and others is being reconciled. Second, humans are created holy and whole, but sin obscured authenticity, thus leaving young leaders to fill the void with all kinds of irrelevant performing to justify one’s uprightness; by his grace, the true inner selves are being purified and rectified to become whole as well as holy again. Third, humans are created for joyful participation in God’s passion for the world, but sin made existence seem futile, thus leaving the identity of young leaders trapped in vanity; by his grace, the passion of lives in the mission of God is being rekindled. This thesis-project focuses on spiritual growth as a grace-vitalized experience of authenticity in the community of faith, the pleasing experience of a differentiated purity and wholeness in God, and a passionate experience of motivated mission to the world. In other words, just as Scorgie summarizes, “the spirituality involves a continuous cycle of an encounter, change, and action,”⁷ which are interconnected and essential to spiritual formation.

From a Christ-centered perspective, the longings of the human spirit are most fully satisfied in Christ, as it is being encountered through the Spirit. The fullness of Christ displays three dynamics that a spiritual life would involve, just as Scorgie describes: “the first dynamic is about Christ with us, the second concerns Christ in

⁶ Glen G. Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality: Three Dimensions of Life with God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 30.

⁷ Scorgie and Reimer, “Overview of Christian Spirituality” in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Glen G. Scorgie (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 29.

us, and the third is about Christ working through us.”⁸ This thesis-project has set the focus in response to the three spiritual formational gaps of young leaders. In response to the disconnected life, Christ is inviting young leaders to come into a relationship with him and others as the community of faith. In response to the fragmented life, to discover life is in him and yield to his transforming influence throughout life in maturing into the image of Christ. In response to the reduced missional life, to allow us working through him into the mission that Christ himself has made for the world.

From a biblical-centered perspective, Richard Hays realizes among the diverse voices of the New Testament, “it is not a unity of a dogmatic system, the unity that we find is the looser unity in the collection of documents that, in various ways, retell and comment upon a single fundamental story.”⁹ And Hays highlights that this story consists of “key images that all the different canonical tellings share.”¹⁰ In this thesis-project, there are three subject matters shared by the New Testament witnesses as foundational guidance for spiritual life development. The first matter is relational: the new community, out of synch with the usual order of the world, an alternative

⁸ Glen G. Scorgie, *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality: Three Dimensions of Life with God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 18. The chapters “Friendship with God” and “Experiencing Community” are the expands for Christ with us, “The Renewal of Holiness” and “The healing of Our Wounds” for Christ in us, “Discovering Purpose and Meaning” and “The Gift of a Personal Calling” for Christ through us.

⁹ Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1996), 193. “That story may be summarized roughly as follows: The God of Israel, the creator of the world, has acted (astoundingly) to rescue a lost and broken world through the death and resurrection of Jesus; the full scope of that rescue is not yet apparent, but God has created a community of witness to the good news, the church. While awaiting the grand conclusion of the story, the church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, is called to reenact the loving obedience of Jesus Christ and thus to serve as a sign of God’s redemptive purposes for the world.”

¹⁰ Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament*, 194.

community that anticipates the ultimate restoration by God. The second matter is transformational: the cross, a Christ-shaped servant leader seeks to cultivate wisdom rather than the virtue of the world. And third matter is missional: the new creation, one seeks an eschatologically marked model that reflects the mercifulness of Christ. These matters are further illustrated in the model of the Beatitudes. The Gospel of Matthew supplies a background for young leaders that allows a framework for promoting spiritual life development that leads to missionary discipleship.

From an evangelical perspective which is based on the five *solae* of the Protestant Reformation,¹¹ Christian spirituality is the mystery of a life lived by faith (*sola fide*) before God through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. At the core of evangelical spirituality is the expectation of God's unconditional grace that continues to be encountered (*sola gratia*), voices continue to be heard through the Scripture in liberating the consciousness of God's divine embrace (*sola Scriptura*), and the people of God continue to be called to follow Christ (*solus Christus*) into mission that proclaims all the fullness of God for man (*solī Deo gloria*). Just as Scorgie in the "Overview of Christian Spirituality" realizes, "There is no fixed formula, the best [one] can do is to identify some pervading themes and recurring emphases, and the encouraging reality is that the Holy Spirit manifests a signature style through it all."¹² This thesis-project identifies the four quadrants of the SLD framework — shadow, wounds, grace, and vocation — which, based on a biblical framework in Ps 139, provide a life review process for young leaders to contemplate, connect, and act upon. Liberating our

¹¹ *Sola Scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia, solus Christus, solī Deo gloria.*

¹² Scorgie and Reimer, "Overview of Christian Spirituality," in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, 29.

consciousness toward the divine embrace of God by faith is vital. It is through attentive dependence on the impulses of the indwelling Holy Spirit that young leaders can participate in the renewing work from within, in becoming more like Christ. The key is to cultivate the consciousness and willing alignment with the presence and grace of God in all things; in such a way, the glory of God can be and will be manifested.

Journey With Christ — The Necessary Dynamics

Many times when people are converted, conversion brings forward an initial spurt of changes, but then people gradually settle down into basically the same life as any non-Christian, measured by experiences of anger, rage, worry, pride, and self-centeredness. There are missing dynamics for deep character building and acquaintance with kingdom life to facilitate the required life changes and spiritual formation.

For deep character building, the discussion in this thesis-project has used many descriptions of social sciences and developmental psychology. Spirituality is essential to acknowledging the primacy of God's grace and not being overburdened by self-actualization, thinking that it is our efforts and methods that facilitate spiritual growth. As Boa has put it, spiritual life development is "a redemptive relationship with the living and personal Creator of all things in obedience and faith, that only such can satisfy the deepest desire."¹³ Progressive obedience implies a continuous awareness and commitment to following Christ, and progress through faith implies believing and experiencing the ever-renewing power one can have in Christ.

¹³ Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 20-21.

For acquaintance with kingdom life, Enoch Wong realizes the progress of spiritual life development in traditional Chinese churches is mostly in the sequence of “believe, become, then belong.”¹⁴ That is, a person first has to believe in Christ and be transformed before one can belong and be related to the community. However, Wong calls for a paradigm shift to “belong, believe, then become,” that is, it is better to first belong to and be related to the community of grace before the walk of faith can be recognized in Christ; then people come to believe and be transformed. Though the discussions in this thesis-project in response to the spiritual needs of young leaders are in the sequence of transformational, relational, to missional, the actual spiritual life development is in the sequence of relational (during community building), transformational (during reflection and awakening), and then missional (during the encouragement on a wider perspective of vocation).

The journey of the human life is a process of experiencing lifelong changes in physical maturation, relationships, sufferings and struggles, goals and desires, as well as fantasies and hopes. All of life is spiritual, including all areas of the personal life — the mind (thoughts, feelings), the body, the spirit (heart, will), and social relationships. The moment of truth comes when God helps young leaders to take off the performance mask so that people begin to see themselves through God’s eyes instead of their own and those of others. It is only then the journey of spiritual life development truly begins. Though one may still fail to live fully and freely, and still have lots of weeds to cover instead of good seeds, for those areas that are transformed, life is no more the same, as it has established a foundation for further maturation.

¹⁴ Enoch K. C. Wong, “Second Generation Exodus: The Experience Sharing with Canadian Chinese Church,” lecture, The Alliance Bible Seminary Center of Canada, November 23, 2015.

Spiritual life development begins with the gift of forgiveness and life in Christ which progresses through faith in the continuous journey of renewing the unhelped self, and through obedience in transforming the trapped identity. The spiritual life is an all-encompassing, lifelong response to God's gracious initiatives in the lives of those whose trust is no more self-surviving focus, but centered in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is a journey with Christ more than a journey toward Christ. As long as a person is on this journey, he never completes it until the day of his resurrection, when the Lord brings him into complete conformity with him.

To Be Fully Alive

In contrast to the seven empty-self characteristics, Boa presents another set of seven characteristics for a life that can be run with endurance under the guidance of the Spirit: "intimacy with Christ, fidelity in the spiritual disciplines, a biblical perspective on the circumstances of life, a teachable and obedient spirit, a clear sense of personal purpose and calling, healthy relationship with resourceful people, and ongoing ministry investment in the lives of others."¹⁵ The suggestion of Boa is due to his observation on the spirituality of Paul in fighting the good fight, finishing the course, and keeping the faith," (2 Tim 4:7) which is a matter of building a lifestyle "moving from the inside to the outside."¹⁶ Thus, the first two of Boa's characteristics are concerned with the vertical relationship with God that reconnect the authentic being; the next three are concerned with personal thought and orientation that redirect authentic meaning;

¹⁵ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 451.

¹⁶ Boa, *Conformed to His Image*, 451.

and the last two are concerned with horizontal relations with others that refocus authentic passion. It comes back to the three searches, meaning, being, and passion, this thesis-project has identified as the core needs of young leaders (see chapter 1), which is also a matter of building a Christian lifestyle.

Paul in his advice to Timothy, in a time when Christians were caught between the new era for those who follow Jesus and the Greco-Roman overpowering domination, is that Christians are to be athletes who endure, farmers of the Word of life, and soldiers with focused purposes. (2 Tim 2:5) This advice is summarized later in the letter to Timothy with the three metaphors of “fighting, finishing, and keeping.” (2 Tim 4:7) What would this generation of young leaders be advised at a time when consciousness of performing busyness, unhelped individualism, a psychological urge for self-focused survival, and an ideology of trapped materialism is the norm? The framework of spiritual life development advises, for young leaders to be fully alive, they need to reconcile and be related, to contemplate and be transformed, and to act and be missional. It is a command from Christ: “have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10) and assurance from him: “to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think according to the power at work within us.” (Eph 3:20) May young Christian leaders ultimately share the witnesses of the New Testament, just as all the saints have: be relational to the community of the faithful, be transformed to Christ-likeness, and be missional to the eschatologically marked new creation.

EPILOGUE — NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Youth Leader Training project was initiated a year before this thesis-project which is very helpful in establishing the initial program structure of the four quadrants life review and the consideration of the essential essences to engage young leaders in such a spiritual journey. The first-year of research started with the program evaluation and the relational growth measurement which helped to recognize how the reframing of past regrets, present struggles, and future outlooks with the divine perspective could enrich the transformational aspect of the identity exploration. The second-year began to have the qualitative evaluation and focus group interview which helped to display the various textures of spirituality that young leaders interpret values, intimacy, roles, and worth in their lives during their stage of transition. The third-year introduced the full set of growth evaluation which helped to acknowledge the effectiveness of the SLD framework in completing the discussion of this thesis-project. Although the overview of the spiritual life development looks structural and systematic, it only takes the standpoint from the spiritual needs of young leaders as of their transitional stage of development. Such an overview is never a static and complete description. As the young leaders are advancing in becoming the emerging Christian leaders, their spiritual perspective needs to widen from individual needs to corporate considerations for the church as a whole. Further discussions are required to go beyond the existing spiritual needs of the young leaders.

Looking at the quantitative assessment of the YLT project, the degree of growth relating to Christ remains steady rather than outstanding as compares to the

rest of the spiritual growth. Focus group interview indicates how young leaders evaluate their state of relationship with Christ, where some refer to the level of Bible knowledge they possess while others are governed by the here-and-now feelings. It reflects the exemplification of faith of the research participants is either abide by religious tradition or driven by contemporary culture, which has not gone through a deeper level of a paradigm shift. Authentic sharing itself cannot bring forward maturity in the truth, yet it helps to reveal values that need to unlearn. Now with closer relevancy correspond to what young leaders have revealed in their misunderstandings of the faith, it is an excellent opportunity for them to relearn the doctrine of the Christian faith. For further discussions of the transformational dynamics, the authentic self needs to be aligned with the authentic truth, allowing the doctrine of faith to speak directly to the wrong beliefs.

The YLT project for four years has completed nearly a whole generation of youth for the same church with a mass of around a hundred young leaders. The youth pastor initial aim is to build up the next generation such that they can take up the heritage and become the uprising vision-bearer. Indeed, these young leaders had built up an experience of what the community of faith should be and when they advanced to the young adult community of the church, their voices came together and asked for a cultural change. The immediate area that they are looking for revival was not the nature of the fellowship, as they are satisfied with the previous YLT sharing groups which they continue to meet. Instead, their attention is with the weekly sacramental practices in worship. They see the traditional sacrament is not consistent with their core understanding of what an authentic community would be.

They are demanding a change to satisfy their interpretation not knowing their understanding of ecclesiology is very thin. For further discussion of the relational dynamics, the understanding of the authentic community of grace needs to be enriched through the comprehension of what a Christian community of faith is. A church is not merely a group of individuals share lives authentically, but a specific and local assembly that echoes the Biblical image as the people of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Spirit where specific Christian disciplines are practices and certain sacramental realities are displayed.

As mentioned in chapter six on the recommendation on a further application, selected participants from all the previous YLT projects are gathered into a trip to India where two places are visited including the Ganges in Varanasi and house of Mother Teresa in Kolkata. Under the guidance of the Spirit, while young leaders are more in touch with their souls, their hearts also take regard of others. They begin to wonder why those desperate pilgrims at the river banks of the Ganges in Varanasi are so vulnerable, and what are the real spiritual urge of these people that the house of Mother Teresa would have attended to differently. The concern is no more just personal spiritual life development, but the spiritual life development of those whom one find compassion with, and what hope the Christian faith can offer to make a difference. For further discussion of the vocation dynamics, it is not just about the hermeneutics of love and mercy in loving God and neighbor but also the hermeneutics of signs and wonders the revelation of God in Christ has had for the world.

This thesis-project highlights the important to stay focus on the spiritual needs of the targets and the essential to articulate a transformational process before

the spiritual journey can be initiated. This journey never travels alone but with a collective of pilgrims. To go deep, the consideration of the spiritual life development cannot be a solely individual focus, but also from a corporate faith perspective. The origins of the disconnected, fragmented, and reduced missional spiritual needs are due to the misinterpretation collectively as of the anthropology, ecclesiology, and eschatology worldviews. For the spiritual life development to advanced onward, these three areas would require further discussions and more profound communal reflections.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Revisit Problem Settings	Restate Spiritual Formation Essences			Re- imagine SLD Framework	Reinitiate Spiritual Journey		
	Transfor- mational	Relational	Vocational				
<i>Ministry Focus Spiritual Need</i>	<i>Identity Exploration</i>	<i>Wholistic Spirituality</i>	<i>Missional Discipleship</i>		<i>Four Quadrants</i>	<i>Ministry Theme</i>	<i>Spiritual Growth</i>
			<i>Inward</i>	<i>Outward</i>			
Performing Leader (Meaning)	Present Moment	Relate Authentically (Value)	<i>Awakening</i>		Shadow to Contemplate	Aware of Repeated Pattern	Authentic Life Vitalized
			Love God	Love Neighbor			
			<i>End of Rope</i>	<i>Being Care-full & Cared for</i>			
Unhelped Helper (Being)	Past Life History	Reconcile Separation (Intimacy)	<i>Purgation</i>		Wounds to Forget	Aware of Unfulfilled Memory	Lovingly Differen- tiated
			All Your Heart	Walk Humbly			
			<i>Lost Most Dear</i>	<i>Inside Put Right</i>			
Self- Focused Survivor	Identity Exploration (Time & Space)	Reposition Concern (Roles)	<i>Illumination</i>		Grace to Remember	Aware of Life Sufficiency	Otherness & God- Focused
			All Your Soul	Love Kindness			
			<i>Content with Oneself</i>	<i>Cooperate Rather Than Compete</i>			
Trapped Identity (Passion)	Future Outlook	Rediscover Humanness (Worth)	<i>Toward Unification</i>		Vocation to Act	Aware of Passionate Goal	Missionally Motivated
			All Your Might	Do Justice			
			<i>Long for God</i>	<i>Fully Committed to God</i>			
	<i>Fragmented Life</i>	<i>Disconnected Life</i>	<i>Reduced Missional Life</i>				

APPENDIX B

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Training Session		Training Theme	SLD Sphere	Worksheet Focus	3-Year Project		
					2015	2016	2017
I. Trust Building							
1	YLT initiation	Goal Set		Purpose	14/1	7/1	8/9
2	Day camp stream trekking	Trust Building			18/1	10/1	18/9
II. Self Understanding							
3	How to know oneself	Awareness	Grace		4/2	21/1	9/10
4	How was I being formed	Character		Character Trail	25/2	21/1	20/11
5	Father image impressions	Father Image	Wounds	Father Image	11/3	4/2	4/12
6	Ceremonial: unforgettable pain	Disturbance				18/2	4/12
7	Night journey	Overcoming			15/3	21/2	22/1
III. Self Confrontation							
8	What prevents growth in life	Repeat Pattern	Shadow	Repeat Pattern	24/3	3/3	12/2
9	What prevents growth in Christ	Repeat Sin		Repeat Sin	2/4	17/3	26/2
10	Ceremonial: solemn assembly	Repentance				7/4	26/2
11	What is my priority in life	Life Priority	Vocation	Fifteen-Year Plan		14/4	12/3
12	What is my passion in life	Life Passion		Shape	15/4	28/4	2/4
13	What does it take to be a disciple	God-centric		God-centric	6/5	5/5	23/4
IV. Reflective Consolidation							
14	Review and pre-camp	Forward Looking		Me as of Now	13/5	5/5	23/4
15	Overnight camp: life journey	Overcoming			23/5	12/5	14/5
16	Overnight camp: challenges	Determination			24/5	13/5	15/5
17	Overnight camp: consolidation	Life Journey		Mask Drawing	25/5	14/5	16/5
V. Life Transition							
18	Rite of passage preparation	Transition		Integration	3/6	26/5	21/5
19	Rite of passage declaration	Maturity		Testimony	10/6	2/6	30/5
20	Review and evaluation	What's Next		You See Me	24/6	16/6	25/6

APPENDIX C

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAINING SESSION

Training Program Rundown	
I. Trust Building	
1	<p>YLT initiation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Norm establishing: build the team and enlighten intention ▶ Group sharing: identity purposes for joining the training ▶ Bible teaching (1 Tim 4.12): work out one's life for the Lord purposefully ▶ Goal setting: look for deeper friendship and life transformation
2	<p>Day camp stream trekking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Team building: establish the relationship ▶ Adventure experience: enfold by trust and step out of the comfort zone ▶ Community building: encourage openness and embracement of each other ▶ Group sharing: reflect on the experiences during the activities
II. Self Understanding	
3	<p>How one comes to know oneself?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Norm establishing: practice the communication tools — awareness wheel ▶ Bible teaching (Deut 6.5): involve the whole person in spiritual formation ▶ Group sharing: reflect on the challenges one has as a young leader
4	<p>How was I being formed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Life reviewing: identity four characters of oneself ▶ Contemplating: recall the developmental trail of these characters ▶ Theme highlighting: review ways of feeling, thinking, and behaving are being formed ▶ Bible teaching (Eph 4.21-24): remind life is a process of formation ▶ Group sharing: reflect on how one's characters are being formed
5	<p>Impression of parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bible teaching: highlight ways scripture describe the heavenly Father ▶ Theme highlighting: reveal ways one learn to interact with the heavenly Father ▶ Group sharing: reflect on the impression one has had with the earthly parent ▶ Spiritual practice: worship, meditate, and pray
6	<p>Ceremonial: unforgettable pains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Theme highlighting: a developmental story of Joseph in Genesis ▶ Testimony sharing: facilitator's own stories of forgiving and forgetting ▶ Spiritual practice: worship, meditate, and pray ▶ Group sharing: share what have one's experienced during the spiritual practices
7	<p>Night journey: wartime tunnel and dam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Team building: encourage empathy through active listening and responses ▶ Adventure experience: explore wartime tunnel and draw out the map ▶ Group sharing: parallel with ways in drawing out the map of life ▶ Contemplating: review what one has gone through in life (at the bottom of a dam) ▶ Adventure experience: climb the 45-degree sloop of the dam barehanded

III. Self Confrontation	
8	<p>What prevents growth in life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Theme highlighting: about growth, the experiential game of egg, chick, human ▶ Bible teaching (OT Saul): stress Saul's repeated pattern caused a loss of his vocation ▶ Contemplating: reflect on one's repeated patterns (emotions, thinking, behaviors) ▶ Group sharing: share the repeated patterns one is experiencing in life ▶ Spiritual practice: worship, meditate, and pray
9	<p>What prevents growth in Christ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recapturing: last time about repeated patterns that stumble life ▶ Theme highlighting: highlight the effect of repeated sins in life also stumble life ▶ Bible teaching (Ps 139): reflect on the experiences of David ▶ Contemplating: review the repeated sins involved in one's life (a list is provided) ▶ Group sharing: reflect the effects of the repeated sins one have had in life ▶ Spiritual practice: worship, meditate, and pray
10	<p>Ceremonial: solemn assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Theme highlighting: explain what is a solemn assembly about in the Bible ▶ Spiritual practice: worship, mediate, and solemn ▶ Ritual practice: provide a corner of confession and intercessional prayer ▶ Group sharing: share what have one's experienced during the spiritual practices
11	<p>What is my priority in life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recapturing: grow toward an adult-to-adult instead of child-to-parent relationship ▶ Contemplating: reflect the kind of fulfillment one looks for in fifteen years ▶ Group sharing: share the drives behind and consider other alternatives ▶ Bible teaching (Luke 9.23): follow Christ requires self-denial and baring the cross ▶ Spiritual practice: worship, meditate, and pray
12	<p>What is my passion in life?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Theme highlighting: develop center of concerns and theme in life ▶ Contemplating: reflect the center of concerns one has experienced in life ▶ Group sharing: share those center of concerns which have developed, put on hold, or forgotten ▶ Bible teaching (Eccles 11.1-10): highlight in ways of your heart, all things God judge
13	<p>What does it take to be a disciple?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recapturing: summarize the spiritual journey the training has been going through ▶ Bible teaching (Phil 3.12): highlight life is not self-focused but other & God-focused ▶ Spiritual practice: one minute pray exercise for each other ▶ Group sharing: share what does other centric mean and the difficulties being so ▶ Panel discussion: ministers to share their lives and struggles in pursuit of God's will ▶ Spiritual practice: worship, mediate, and pray

IV. Reflective Consolidation	
14	<p>Review and pre-camp</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Contemplating: recall the training so far and the reflections one has captured ▶ Forum sharing: all share about one's reflections during the training so far ▶ Group sharing: reflect how to take thing onward as of what one has shared ▶ Adventuring briefing: highlight upcoming camp and things for attention ▶ Group sharing: goal set one's purposes and arrange necessary logistic
15	<p>Overnight camping: life journey simulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Team building: reinforce intention and commitment ▶ Adventure experience: path-find mountain trail to campsite ▶ Community building: prepare for the dinner outdoor ▶ Adventure experience: travel across bushes barehanded and solo for the night
16	<p>Overnight camping: resiliency challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Group sharing: share about the bush walk and solo experience ▶ Spiritual practice: worship, meditate, and pray ▶ Adventure experience: support each other hike the downhill track to climbing spot ▶ Adventure experience: rock climb and abseil ▶ Group sharing: share about the fear and the courage one needs to take for life ▶ Adventure experience: hike to hostel and settle for dinner ▶ Group sharing: share about the outdoor journey as compare to the journey of life
17	<p>Overnight camping: consolidation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adventure experience: meet the high-wall final challenge for the whole community ▶ Contemplating: reflect the thankful experienced, personal growth, forthcoming commitment to make ▶ Group sharing: share about what has one reflected ▶ Mask painting: translate what one has experienced and design a paint on a mask
V. Life Transition	
18	<p>Rite of passage preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Contemplating: express words of appreciation or encouragement to each others ▶ Forum sharing: share the discoveries one has had during the training ▶ Ceremony preparation: rehearse rundown, complete the mask painting, and ready the testimony
19	<p>Rite of passage declaration and family sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Multimedia display: play the clips on training workshops and outdoor activities ▶ Testimony sharing: three representatives from each group to share their growth ▶ Gallery display: explain the artwork to one's parent ▶ Family sharing: share heartfelt words to parent ▶ Declaration: proclaim the statement of adulthood ▶ Word of Encouragement: share observation and final blessing by the ministers
20	<p>Review and evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Statistics gathering: fill in the questionnaire and evaluation ▶ Forum sharing: give a brief overall impression on the training ▶ Celebrating: capture the moment

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN AND SCRIPT (SESSION 8)

Most training sessions are three-hour workshops and below is a rundown overview for training session 8 for reference.

1. One-third through YLT with a quick recap (15 mins)
 - ✓ Essential to listen to oneself and meditate the various drives and thoughts inside. Encourage to continue with one's journal writing.
 - ✓ There is a history behind the formation of our personality, and one needs to go back to the events and recall the significance of it. Most important of all, discover if ever God is present in all these happening.
 - ✓ A soulful meditation is preferred than analytical, journal writing helps to crystallize the thought, and sharing among others helps to expand the reflections.
2. Debrief the previous session and highlight the “child-adult-parent” model (15 mins)
 - ✓ Last time outdoor adventure night journey may recall many unpleasant memories, but there are also moments of thanksgiving. One can still find oneself among the messiness of life, just like drawing a roadmap during the two hours exploration in the wartime tunnel.
 - ✓ Introduce the model “child-adult-parent relationship” and encourage the “adult-adult” is the mature way of interaction. Together with a sharing about a mother-son interaction during a cycling trip to contrast the different between “child-adult” with “adult-adult” mode of communication.
 - ✓ A moment of stillness to sink in the message.
3. Experiential game for today theme (20 mins)
 - ✓ The aim is to prepare the participants with the necessary patient, the kind of expectation, and the possible joy one can discover when going through the process of growth.
 - ✓ Experiential game “rock-paper-scissors” where two people encounter and show a hand sign of rock, paper, or scissors. Rock wins scissors, scissors win paper and paper wins rock. Every time the person wins, he can advance to a different stage of life, and losses will fall back to the before stage. The stages are from egg to chick, chick to chicken, chicken to man, and finally, man can reach to the other shore release from this cycle.
 - ✓ Debriefing: What is the feeling at different stages? What is the frustration in cycling between different stages? What is the feeling when one is finally out of the chaotic cycle. What does it take for one to go through all the stages of growth?
4. Biblical teaching, the repeated pattern of king Saul (20 mins)
 - ✓ Few situations in the Bible about the repeated pattern of King Saul; I Samuel 13:8-12 (v11 when I saw people were scattering from me), 15:18-24 (v24 I feared

the people and obeyed their voice), and 15:24-31 (v30 honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel)

- ✓ King Saul paid very high attention to the crowd and driven by their responses.
- ✓ Judges 19-20 displays a shameful history about the tribe of Benjamin nearly became extinct.
- ✓ Saul is not confident of oneself and always seek affirmation from others. The pride of Saul put him in a repeated pattern concerning how people take respect of him. Such cost brokenness nearly in every of his relationship. In the end, it even costs a call-off with his calling as a king.
- ✓ The repeated pattern is something happened in our life over again, either as repeated behaviors, repeated feelings, or repeated thoughts of mind. Sometimes we are conscious of it while most of the time we may not recognize it. For those repeated patterns that bring disturbances and hindrances in our life, we may need to pay attention to it.

5. Worksheet reflection (20 mins)

- ✓ In group each to share their initial thought about a possible repeated pattern in one sentence to have a quick scan to see if anyone get stuck.
- ✓ Then breakout and each to go through the guided questions in the worksheet; What is the repeated pattern? What is the backdrop when such repeated pattern occurs? What is the effect it brings along and how has such prevented growth in life?

6. Group time (40 mins)

- ✓ Each to share their discoveries.
- ✓ Other listen and use awareness wheel (doing, sensing, feeling, thinking, wishing) to help each other to expand the reflections.
- ✓ Those among the group who are close to the one who shares day-by-day may be able to contribute an observer opinion.

7. Worship and Eucharist (30 mins)

- ✓ Worship time highlights the reality that God knows our innermost, and he understands all the causes and consequences of the behind stories.
- ✓ Meditative moment allows each to sink into one's thoughts and the Spirit to speak to them, particular focus on the ripple effects created by the repeated pattern that has not realized and attended to properly.
- ✓ Prayer times corporately or individually allowing the participants to seek renewal in the Lord.
- ✓ Eucharist allows the very fact of Christ to be present in the very history of our life; life is messy but Jesus finds himself, and he is inviting us to find ourselves among our messiness.

APPENDIX E

PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Rank from 1 (strongly disagree / low) to 5 (strongly agree / high)

A. Overall Response						1	2	3	4	5					
1. Facilitate effective learning and reflection															
2. Encourage participation and positive motivation															
3. Promote spiritual life growth															
4. Able to relate one's spiritual growth to Biblical teaching															
B. Effect of the YLT Project						1	2	3	4	5					
1. Help you to become more authentic in relating to oneself															
2. Help you to become more differentiated in relating to family															
3. Help you to become more relational in relating to others															
4. Help you to become more mature to show people to Christ															
5. Help you to become more mature as a young leader															
C. Effect of Selected Training Sessions					Learnt	1	2	3	4	5					
2. Day Camp stream trekking (trust building)															
3. How one comes to know oneself (self awareness)															
4. How was I being formed (character Trail)															
5. Impression of parents (father Image)															
7. Night journey: wartime tunnel & dam (overcoming)															
8. What prevents growth in life (repeat patterns)															
9. What prevents growth in Christ (repeat sins)															
12. What is my passion in life (life passion)															
13. What does it take to be a disciple (God-centric)															
17. Overnight camp (overcoming)															
18. Rite of passage preparation															
19. Rite of passage declaration (testimony)															
D. Delivery of the Training Community					Small Group					One-on-one					
					1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Are they listening															
2. Are they sensitive															
3. Are they supportive															
4. Are they encouraging dialog															

E. Effect of the Training Community		Small Group					One-on-one				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Help you to listen to yourself											
2. Help you to share truthfully											
3. Help you to face your weakness and shadow											
4. Help you to start to discover your path in life											
5. Help you to be closer to Jesus											
F. Effect of the Training Community		Altogether					Journal				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Help you to listen to yourself											
2. Help you to share truthfully											
3. Help you to face your weakness and shadow											
4. Help you to start to discover your path in life											
5. Help you to be closer to Jesus											
G. Comment											
1. For yourself											
2. For the program											
3. For your group											
4. For your facilitator											
H. Demographic											
1. Training Number / Name						8. Group Facilitator Name					
2. Gender (Male / Female)						9. Status (College, Transition, Working)					
3. Age (>18, 18-20, 21-23, >23)						10. If studying, #of years of class					
4. Involve leading a group (Y / N)						11. If graduate, # of years left school					
5. # of year as Christian						12. If working, # of years of working					
6. # of years mother as Christian (0, 1-2, 3-6, >6)						13. If working, occupation					
7. # of years father as Christian (0, 1-2, 3-6, >6)						14. Subject studying or studied					

APPENDIX F

GROWTH EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Rank from 1 (strongly disagree/less) to 7 (strongly agree/much)	Before					After				
A. Personal Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. I tend to create meaning on my own shelves										
2. I tend to dislike boredom and dull, enjoy amusement and pleasure										
3. I tend to preoccupy with my own preferences and needs										
4. I tend to let other people do my living and thinking for me										
5. I tend to judge reality based on images & sensation than reasoning										
6. I tend to attend to external quality (pleasurable, outlook, image) than internal quality (virtue, fidelity, intellectual, spirituality)										
7. I tend to fill my life with activities and jump from task to task										
B. Spiritual Needs Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. I usually enjoy being in a necessary role to deliver something										
2. I recognize as of now a meaningful purpose life is moving to										
3. I usually put aside emotions and struggles, just to get things done										
4. I recognize my past and am content with whom I have become										
5. I usually focus on my own interest to manage my life.										
6. I recognize life is too narrow when I only focus on myself										
7. I usually feel exhausted after serving and sometimes feel empty										
8. I recognize my role and purpose after all these years of serving										
C. Learning After the training program	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. I'm aware certain repeated patterns hinder life from going far										
2. I'm aware certain repeated sins hinder life from going deep										
3. I'm aware God is present and shares my deep hurts or pains										
4. I'm aware God dissolves my unsettled grief & dissatisfying past										
5. I'm aware of trails of God's grace in various incidents of my life										
6. I'm aware God's grace helps me to embrace my life and others										
7. I'm aware I have compassion for certain people										
8. I'm aware my gifts match with the ministry I am serving										

Rank from 1 (strongly disagree/less) to 7 (strongly agree/much)	Before					After				
D. Relational Growth Before and After	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Understanding of self										
2. Appreciation of self										
3. Understanding of parents										
4. Ties with parents										
5. Connection with others										
6. Truthfulness with others										
7. Appreciation toward life										
8. Desire for vision of life										
9. Knowing what it is to walk with Jesus										
10. Passion to walk with Jesus										
E. Transformational Growth Before and After	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. I discover I can share myself truthfully and completely										
2. I discover life starts to integrate when I am truly inside out										
3. I discover my misfortune differently and let go the cause										
4. I discover I am more a beloved person of God than before										
5. I discover my narrow-heartedness of pride and self-interest										
6. I discover the focus of my story is not just about me										
7. I discover I should be more focused to pursue my calling										
8. I discover I am more excited with God's mission than my own gain (e.g., success in career, or acceptance by my peers)										
F. Missional Growth Before and After	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. I realize a determination to deal with my repeated problem										
2. I realize my world starts resting on an order										
3. I realize every day I get closer to whom I will become										
4. I realize I can be at peace with those in conflict with me										
5. I realize life has many alternative possibilities in God										
6. I realize God has given me much more to share with others										
7. I realize what is right to stand for and willing to take the heat										
8. I realize what I am living for and am willing to pay the costs										

G. Personal Discovery

1. Which learnings are more memorable?

2. What have the learnings enlightened you?

3. How differences would you describe yourself after the training?

4. Share a life attitude one wish to take it forward after the training.

H. Demographic

1. Training Number / Name

2. Group Facilitator Name

APPENDIX G

DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAM ACROSS THREE YEARS

The training programs are evaluated referring to the “quantitative assessment tools — program evaluation” set of questions C “delivery of the training programs” (see chapter 4). The assessment of selected training sessions across three years with three groups each year are listed below. Each year has a yearly average and altogether a grand average, and each training session an item average. The score is highlighted if ever the scoring is equal or gets higher than the grand average. Item and yearly average are highlighted if it is higher than the grand average.

Stage		Training Session (Rank from 1 low to 5 high)	SLD	2015				2016				2017				Item X̄		
				I	2	3	X̄	I	2	3	X̄	I	2	3	X̄			
I	2	Day camp stream trekking (Trust Building)	Grace	3.6	3.1	3.5	3.4	3.2	4.0	2.4	3.2	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.9	3.6		
II	3	How much one knows oneself (Self Awareness)	Grace	3.3	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.7	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.2	3.1		
	4	How am I being formed (Character Trail)	Grace	3.8	3.7	3.0	3.7	3.5	4.0	3.4	3.6	4.1	3.4	4.2	3.9	3.8		
	5	Impression on parents (Father Image)	Wounds	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.6		
	7	Night journey (Overcoming)	Wounds	3.8	3.7	4.2	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.0	3.5	4.6	3.8	4.3	4.2	3.9		
III	8	What prevents growth in life (Repeat Pattern)	Shadow	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	4.1	4.8	3.8	4.6	4.4	4.1		
	9	What prevents growth in Christ (Repeat Sin)	Shadow	3.5	4.0	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.7	4.3	4.2	4.0	4.2	3.9		
	12	What's my passion (Life Passion)	Vocation	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.6	2.8	3.2	4.4	3.8	3.6	3.9	3.4		
	13	What it takes to be a disciple (God Focus)	Vocation	4.2	3.9	4.1	4.0	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.8	4.2	3.8	3.9	3.8		
IV	17	Overnight camp (Life Journey)	Grace	4.2	4.5	4.0	4.2	3.5	4.6	4.2	4.1	4.5	4.4	4.7	4.5	4.3		
V	19	Rite of passage (Testimony)	Vocation	3.3	3.9	3.9	3.7	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.6	4.2	3.6	3.8	3.9	4.1		
Yearly Average				3.6				3.6				4.0						
Grand Average																		3.8

APPENDIX H

DELIVERY OF THE COMMUNITY ACROSS THREE-YEAR

The training community is evaluated referring to the “quantitative assessment tools — program evaluation” set of questions E “delivery of the training community” (see chapter 4), where the questions of assessment 1 to 5 consist of a sequence of spiritual growth progression:

- ✓ able to listen and self-aware (1) is a buildup for truthfulness;
- ✓ able to be truthful and authentic (2) is a buildup for facing one's shadow and wounds;
- ✓ able to confront one's indulgences and handicaps (3) is a buildup for discovering one's path of life;
- ✓ able to walk one's path of life in Christ (4) is a buildup for drawing closer to Christ (5).

The assessment of all the spheres of the training community across three years with three groups each year are listed below, except the personal sphere only has 2017 statistics. Each year has a yearly average for each of the sphere, each sphere has a sphere average, and altogether an all spheres yearly average. The score is highlighted if ever the scoring gets higher than the sphere average as of the individual sphere.

Spiritual Growth Progression (Rank from 1 low to 5 high)															
Help you to . . .	Sphere	2015				2016				2017				Item X̄	Sphere X̄
		1	2	3	X̄	1	2	3	X̄	1	2	3	X̄		
1 Listen to yourself	Public Altogether	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.7	3.2	3.2	3.4	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.8	3.4	
2 Share truthfully		2.7	2.7	3.3	2.9	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.4	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.4	
3 Face weakness & shadow		3.2	3.1	2.5	2.9	3.7	2.8	3.8	3.4	4.2	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.3	
4 Start discover path of life		2.9	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.4	
5 Be closer to Jesus		3.1	3.8	3.1	3.3	4.5	3.8	3.6	4.0	4.5	4.2	3.4	4.0	3.8	
Yearly Average		3.1				3.5				3.8				3.5	
1 Listen to yourself	In-Circle Small Group	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.0	
2 Share truthfully		4.2	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.5	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.4	4.7	3.8	4.3	3.9	
3 Face weakness & shadow		3.7	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.2	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.6	4.1	4.8	4.5	4.1	
4 Start discover path of life		3.8	3.7	3.5	3.7	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.4	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.7	
5 Be closer to Jesus		3.3	3.4	3.0	3.2	4.2	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	
Yearly Average		3.7				3.8				4.0				3.8	
1 Listen to yourself	Private One-On-One	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.8	4.5	3.4	3.9	4.7	4.5	4.8	4.7	4.2	
2 Share truthfully		4.3	4.0	4.3	4.2	3.7	3.8	2.8	3.4	4.4	4.7	4.4	4.5	4.0	
3 Face weakness & shadow		4.0	3.9	3.3	3.7	3.7	4.3	3.2	3.7	4.4	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.8	
4 Start discover path of life		3.8	3.8	3.9	3.8	4.3	4.0	3.0	3.8	4.6	3.9	4.3	4.3	4.0	
5 Be closer to Jesus		3.4	3.3	3.3	3.3	4.2	3.8	3.4	3.8	4.2	3.9	3.4	3.8	3.7	
Yearly Average		3.8				3.7				4.3				3.9	
1 Listen to yourself	Personal Journal Writing									4.2	4.5	5.0	4.6	4.6	
2 Share truthfully										3.8	4.4	5.0	4.4	4.4	
3 Face weakness & shadow										3.9	4.1	4.5	4.2	4.2	
4 Start discover path of life										3.2	4.0	3.5	3.6	3.6	
5 Be closer to Jesus										3.2	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.7	
Yearly Average										4.1				4.1	
All Spheres Yearly Average		3.5				3.7				4.0					

APPENDIX I

EFFECT OF THE GROWTH ACROSS THREE YEARS

The relational growth is evaluated referring to the “quantitative assessment tools — growth evaluation” set of questions D “relational growth” (see chapter 4), where questions of assessment 1 to 10 consist of four areas of spiritual growth. There are a total of five pairs of spiritual growth listed; the 1st item in the pair is related to the increase of understanding and connection, while the 2nd item is related to the increase in appreciation and desire for changes.

SLD Frame	Spiritual Need	Training Theme	Spiritual Growth	Assessment Question (Degree of . . .)
Shadow	Performing Leader	Repeated Pattern	Authentic Life Vitalized	1 Understanding of self 2 Appreciation of self
Wounds	Unhelped Helper	Unfulfilled Memory	Lovingly Differentiated	3 Understanding of parents 4 Ties with parents
Grace	Self-Focused Survivor	Life Sufficiency	Otherness & God-Focused	5 Connection with others 6 Truthfulness with others
Vocation	Trapped Identity	Passionate Goal	Life Exploration	7 Appreciation of life 8 Desire for a vision in life
		Missional Drive	Missionally Motivated	9 Know what it is to walk with Jesus 10 Passion to walk with Jesus

The assessment of the relational growth across three years is listed below by three areas; before training, after training, and degree of growth. Each area has a yearly average for each of the year, a total average of 1st item in the pair, a total average of 2nd item in the pair, and a grand average covering all three years. The score is highlighted if ever the scoring gets higher than the grand average.

Relational Growth (Rank from 1 to 5) Degree of . . .		SLD Sphere	Before				After				Growth						
			15'	16'	17'	̄X	15'	16'	17'	̄X	15'	16'	17'	̄X			
1	Understanding of self	Shadow	2.8	2.4	2.6	2.6		4.1	3.9	3.9	4.0		1.3	1.5	1.3	1.4	
2	Appreciation of self		2.8	2.4	2.2		2.5	3.3	3.2	3.3		3.3	0.5	0.8	1.1		0.8
3	Understanding of parents	Wounds	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.7		3.8	4.0	3.5	3.8		0.9	1.3	1.0	1.0	
4	Ties with parents		3.2	2.8	2.5		2.8	3.6	3.8	3.4		3.6	0.4	0.9	0.8		0.7
5	Connection with others	Grace	3.0	2.8	2.7	2.8		3.9	3.6	3.5	3.7		1.0	0.7	0.7	0.8	
6	Truthfulness with others		3.0	3.0	3.4		3.1	3.7	3.8	3.8		3.8	0.6	0.8	0.4		0.6
7	Appreciation of life	Vocation (Purposeful)	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.7		3.6	3.6	3.8	3.7		0.9	1.1	0.9	1.0	
8	Desire of a vision in life		2.8	2.7	3.4		3.0	3.4	3.7	4.2		3.8	0.6	1.0	0.8		0.8
9	Know what it is to walk with Jesus	Vocation (Missional)	3.1	3.0	2.5	2.9		3.7	3.9	3.4	3.7		0.6	0.9	0.9	0.8	
10	Passion to walk with Jesus		3.3	3.0	3.1		3.1	3.9	4.2	3.8		4.0	0.6	1.1	0.7		0.8
Yearly Average			3.0	2.7	2.8			3.7	3.8	3.7			0.7	1.0	0.9		
1st and 2nd Item Total Average						2.7	2.9			3.7	3.7				1.0	0.7	
Grand Average						2.8				3.7					0.9		

The statistics of the degree of growth is further broken down by people groups.

Each year has a yearly average and a grand average covering all three years. The score is highlighted if ever the scoring gets higher than the grand average.

Relational Growth (Rank from 1 to 5) Degree of . . .	SLD Sphere	Degree of Growth												
		2015				2016				2017				Item X̄
		1	2	3	X̄	1	2	3	X̄	1	2	3	X̄	
1 Understanding of self	Shadow	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.4
2 Appreciation of self		0.0	0.7	0.7	0.5	1.2	1.2	0.2	0.8	1.1	0.9	1.3	1.1	0.8
3 Understanding of parents	Wounds	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.5	1.5	1.0	1.3	0.7	0.6	1.6	1.0	1.0
4 Ties with parents		0.5	0.3	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.5	0.9	1.1	0.8	0.7
5 Connection with others	Grace	1.3	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.0	0.4	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.8
6 Truthfulness with others		1.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6
7 Appreciation of life	Vocation (Purposeful)	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.1	0.7	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.0
8 Desire of a vision in life		0.3	0.7	0.0	0.6	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.0	0.7	1.1	0.6	0.8	0.8
9 Know what it is to walk with Jesus	Vocation (Missional)	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.6	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.8
10 Passion to walk with Jesus		0.5	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8
Yearly Average					0.7	1.0				0.9				
Grand Average														0.9

APPENDIX J

EFFECT OF THE PROJECT ACROSS THREE YEARS

The project is evaluated referring to the “quantitative assessment tools -- program evaluation” set of questions B “effect of the YLT project” (see chapter 4) The questions of assessment 1 to 4 refer to the four area of spiritual growth (authentic life vitalized, lovingly differentiated, otherness & God-focused, missionally motivated) which correspond to the structure of the SLD framework (Shadow, Wounds, Grace, Vocation) as summarized in appendix A. And together the assessment 5 is the overall indicator which accesses the degree as a matured young leader the participant has become. The assessment of the effect of the project across three years with three groups each year is listed below. Each year has a yearly average and altogether a grand average. The score is highlighted if ever the scoring gets higher than the grand average.

Effect (Rank from 1 to 5) become more . . .	SLD	2015				2016				2017				Item \bar{X}
		1	2	3	\bar{X}	1	2	3	\bar{X}	1	2	3	\bar{X}	
1 Authentic in relating to oneself	Shadow	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.3
2 Differentiated in relating to family	Wounds	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.7	4.3	3.5	4.0	3.9	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.9
3 Relational in relating to others	Grace	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.2	3.6	4.0	4.2	4.6	4.0	4.3	4.2
4 Mature to show people to Christ	Vocation	3.8	4.6	4.4	4.3	4.3	3.3	3.4	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.3	3.5	3.8
5 Mature as a young leader		3.7	4.4	3.9	4.0	4.2	3.7	4.0	3.9	4.2	3.6	3.0	3.6	3.8
Group Average		4.0	4.2	4.1		4.3	3.8	3.8		4.2	4.0	3.8		
Yearly Average					4.1				4.0				4.0	
Grand Average														4.0

APPENDIX K

EMPTY-SELF CHARACTERISTICS IN 2017

The empty-self characteristics are evaluated referring to the “quantitative assessment tools — growth evaluation” set of questions A “emptiness characteristics” (see chapter 4), where the questions of assessment 1 to 7 consist of seven attributes of what psychologists call the “empty self.”

The assessment of the empty-self characteristics of 2017 by participant is listed below. Scorings beyond the median 4.0 are taken as a positive indication of empty-self characteristics, and they are highlighted for attention.

Empty Self Characteristics (Rank from 1 to 7)	Year 2017 Participant Reference Number															Participant Above Median	
	11	12	13	14	15	21	22	23	24	25	31	32	33	34	35		
1 Inordinate Individualistic	5	6	5	6	6	4	5	6	6	7	6	4	3	5	6	12	80%
2 Extended Adolescence	4	3	5	6	4	4	4	3	5	7	5	4	5	2	5	7	47%
3 Narcissism	5	4	5	6	5	3	6	5	4	6	6	3	3	6	4	9	60%
4 Passivity	1	2	3	5	7	3	5	6	7	5	2	4	4	7	5	8	53%
5 Sensuality	2	5	2	4	5	3	5	6	2	6	4	3	5	6	5	8	53%
6 Lack of Interior Life	2	2	3	4	6	2	4	2	4	5	3	3	3	5	4	3	20%
7 Hurried Busy Lives	4	3	5	6	5	4	5	2	4	1	1	4	4	2	3	3	20%
Total	23	25	28	37	38	23	34	30	32	37	27	25	27	33	32		
> 50% Full Score (25)			28	37	38		34	30	32	37	27		27	33	32	11	73%
> 75% Full Score (36)				37	38					37						3	20%

APPENDIX L

SPIRITUAL NEEDS CHARACTERISTICS IN 2017

The spiritual needs characteristics are evaluated referring to the “quantitative assessment tools — growth evaluation” set of questions B “spiritual needs” (see chapter 4), where questions of assessment 1 to 8 refer to the four areas of spiritual need (performing leader, unhelped helper, self-focused survivor, trapped identity) corresponds to the structure of the SLD framework (Shadow, Wounds, Grace, Vocation). The assessment of the spiritual need characteristics of 2017 by group is listed below. The score is highlighted if ever the scoring gets higher than the grand average.

Spiritual Need Before Training (Rank from 1 low to 7 high)	Group			Item \bar{X}	SLD Sphere	Sphere \bar{X}
	1	2	3			
1 Enjoy being in a necessary role to deliver something	4.2	4.6	4.0	4.3	Shadow Performing Leader	4.7
2 Recognize NOT a meaningful purpose in life	5.7	5.8	4.0	5.2		
3 Put aside emotions and struggles to get things done	3.2	3.8	3.0	3.3	Wounds UnHelped Helper	3.7
4 Recognize NOT my past nor content with whom I am	3.6	3.4	5.0	4.0		
5 Focus on my own interest to manage my life.	3.4	3.4	3.8	3.5	Grace Self- Focused Survivor	4.3
6 Recognize NOT life is too narrow if focus on myself	5.0	5.2	4.8	5.0		
7 Feel exhausted after serving and sometimes feel empty	4.4	3.0	4.6	4.0	Vocation Trapped Identity	3.8
8 Recognize NOT role & purpose after years of serving	3.2	3.4	4.2	3.6		
Grand Average	4.1					

APPENDIX M

DEGREE OF THE AWARENESS ACQUIRED IN 2017

The degree of the awareness acquired is evaluated referring to the “quantitative assessment tools — growth evaluation” set of questions C “awareness acquired” (see chapter 4). Questions of assessment 1 to 8 refer to the training themes in response to the four areas of the spiritual needs. The assessment of the awareness acquired of 2017 by group is listed below. The score is highlighted if ever the scoring gets higher than the grand average.

Awareness Acquired by Group I am aware . . . (Rank from 1 low to 7 high)	SLD Sphere	Group			Item \bar{X}		Grand \bar{X}
		1	2	3			
1 Repeated patterns that hinder life	Shadow Performing Leader	6.4	6.0	5.8	6.1	6.0	
2 Repeated sins that hinder life		6.0	6.0	5.6	5.9		
3 God shares my deep hurts and pains	Wounds UnHelped Helper	5.4	6.2	5.2	5.6	5.6	
4 God dissolves my unsettled grief		6.0	5.8	5.0	5.6		
5 Trail of God's grace in life	Grace Self- Focused Survivor	5.6	6.0	5.2	5.6	5.7	
6 Grace help me to embrace life & others		6.2	5.8	5.4	5.8		
7 Have compassion for certain people	Vocation Trapped Identity	5.4	6.1	6.0	5.8	5.4	
8 Gifts match with my ministry serving		5.0	4.4	5.4	4.9		
Group Average		5.8	5.8	5.5			5.7

The statistics are further broken down by participant with a total per participant.

One with full score 7.0 is highlighted, and total is highlighted if higher than the total average.

	SLD Sphere	Awareness Acquired by Individual Participant															Item \bar{X}	Total \bar{X}
		I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	2I	22	23	24	25	3I	32	33	34	35		
1	Shadow	6	6	6	7	7	6	6	5	7	6	6	5	5	6	7	6.1	
2		6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	7	6	7	5	5	6	5	5.9	
3	Wound	6	5	5	5	6	7	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	3	6	5.6	
4		6	7	5	6	6	7	6	6	6	4	5	5	7	2	6	5.6	
5	Grace	5	6	5	5	6	7	5	6	7	5	5	6	6	3	6	5.5	
6		6	6	6	7	6	6	5	5	7	6	6	7	6	2	6	5.8	
7	Vocation	6	5	6	3	7	5	5.5	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	5.8	
8		5	4	6	4	6	4	5	4	7	2	6	6	6	4	5	4.9	
Total		46	45	45	43	50	48	45	44	54	41	46	46	47	32	47		46

APPENDIX N

EFFECT OF THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN 2017

The effect of the spiritual growth is evaluated by three categories referring to the “quantitative assessment tools — growth evaluation” set of questions D “relational growth,” E “transformational growth,” and F “missional growth” (see chapter 4). The assessment of the spiritual growth of 2017 by SLD sphere, with before and after as well as the degree of growth is listed below. The score is highlighted if ever the scorings gets higher than the total grand average.

Spiritual Growth (Rank from 1 low to 7 high)		Before		After		Growth	
Relational	Understanding of self	3.7	3.4	5.5	5.1	1.8	1.7
	Appreciation toward self	3.1		4.7		1.6	
Transformational	Share myself truthfully & fully	4.4	4.4	5.8	5.8	1.4	1.4
	Life integrates inside out	4.5		5.9		1.4	
Missional	To do with my repeat problems	3.6	3.6	5.4	5.3	1.8	1.8
	Joy of vitalizing who I really am	3.5		5.2		1.7	
Grand Average of Shadow		3.8		5.4		1.6	
Relational	Understanding of parents	3.5	3.5	4.9	4.8	1.4	1.3
	Ties with parents	3.5		4.7		1.2	
Transformational	Can forgive cause of misfortune	4.3	4.3	5.7	5.7	1.4	1.3
	More a lovingly person of God	4.4		5.6		1.2	
Missional	Get closer to whom I will become	3.5	3.3	5.2	4.9	1.7	1.6
	At peace with those in conflict	3.3		4.7		1.4	
Grand Average of Wounds		3.7		5.1		1.4	
Relational	Connection with others	3.9	4.3	4.9	5.1	1.0	0.8
	Truthfulness with others	4.8		5.4		0.6	
Transformational	See narrow-heartedness of pride	3.8	4.1	4.3	4.9	0.5	0.8
	Focus on my story is not just me	4.4		5.5		1.1	
Missional	Life has many alternatives in God	4.2	4.2	5.6	5.6	1.4	1.4
	Much more to share with others	4.3		5.6		1.3	
Grand Average of Grace		4.2		5.2		1.0	
Relational	Appreciation toward life	4.0	4.2	5.3	5.4	1.3	1.2
	Desire for a vision in life	4.7		5.9		1.2	
	Knowing what it is to walk with Jesus	3.5		4.8		1.3	
	Passion to walk with Jesus	4.4		5.3		0.9	
Transformational	Need focus to pursuit calling	4.2	4.4	5.7	5.5	1.5	1.2
	Excited with God's mission	4.5		5.3		0.8	
Missional	What is right to stand for	4.3	4.1	5.1	5.1	0.8	1.1
	Am willing to pay the costs	3.9		5.2		1.3	
Grand Average of Vocation		4.2		5.3		1.1	
Total Grand Average		4.0		5.3		1.3	

APPENDIX O

THEMATIC EXPRESSION OF 2016

The expressions are gathered referring to the “qualitative assessment approach — thematic expression” set of reflective questions (see chapter 4). Questions of reflection 1 to 4 lay out the themes for the sorting of the qualitative data; What has one discovered? What has one reflected on life? What kind of life is looking forward? What attitude of life it taking forward? The thematic expression of 2016 for all participants as of their experiences with the SLD framework which corresponds to the four questions of reflection are listed below.

What has one discovered?

- ✓ just be content with oneself; pretending to be confident is unnecessary
- ✓ what matters is not completing a task but reflecting the disturbances inside
- ✓ a step at a time
- ✓ no more running away from the problem
- ✓ learn not to depend on others to do it for you
- ✓ not to care so much about what others think and find a difference in oneself
- ✓ the things not my own choice, but I still need to work on them for others' sake
- ✓ learn to trust those around
- ✓ wait too long will shift the focus
- ✓ step out and try to see more
- ✓ it is a surprise to recognize one's potential
- ✓ lean on the Lord and not the rock climbing wall
- ✓ depend on God particularly at a time people see as impossible
- ✓ focus on God instead of the situation

What has one reflected?

- ✓ do not rush into the thing but reflect anew
- ✓ accept my ways may be wrong
- ✓ what's insecure still felt as unsafe but now with a different outlook
- ✓ embrace fear and difficulties just like nature embraces us

- ✓ what's behind you can be a lot more beautiful and meaningful
- ✓ all the past experiences contribute to who I am and what I can do as of now
- ✓ learn not to depend on one's strength
- ✓ fear of being trapped, but togetherness helps me to be free from self-containment
- ✓ life: need to take part and be compassionate to others in order to enjoy
- ✓ seeing through others helps me to expand my understanding of God
- ✓ enjoying the process of the camp is just the same way to enjoy life
- ✓ need to build confidence in God
- ✓ be joyful even in difficult times
- ✓ the adventure abseiling reminds one needs to let go to become a disciple

What kind of life looking forward?

- ✓ live authentically: break through the frames, outflow the colors of life
- ✓ inside out: keep your heart clean, be authentic to the Lord, trust in him
- ✓ explore: solitude allows a time of meditation and reflection
- ✓ a third-person me: life is like a set of scattered dots
- ✓ still struggling: even in Christ, temptation still comes, and go astray sometimes
- ✓ change and evolve: perseverance is to overcome shadow and surpass loneliness
- ✓ speechless: unspeakable impressions inside
- ✓ bewildered: lost, astray, through God find a way
- ✓ I can see now: he is leading the way, the very work of God
- ✓ together with you: though the road is long, even in darkness there is light
- ✓ lost and found: up and down in life, reflect upon life, colors of life always along
- ✓ undercover: the color under the veil
- ✓ prodigal return: previously as a slacker it stings, now love God and my neighbor
- ✓ superhero: all along I see powers I possess till I realize abilities are from God
- ✓ thread of mind: reflect fragmented emotions, reintegrate the thread of mind
- ✓ exit: inside a labyrinth, follow you closely, I will
- ✓ freedom: the little one desire to be freed
- ✓ moment of maturity: I find my way

What attitude of life taking forward?

- ✓ learn not to mind what others say, be authentic to encounter one's true side
- ✓ learn to be more authentic; speak directly instead of beating around the bush
- ✓ need to move out of the comfort zone and try to express more of one's feelings
- ✓ review life seriously, hold tight with God's guidance, and take courage to be transformed
- ✓ not accepting oneself has prevented me from moving life forward
- ✓ learn more to embrace what seems not perfect
- ✓ want to pursue the real completeness instead of perfection

- ✓ fears and struggles are positive to help me know God and myself more
- ✓ discover how the acquired low self-esteem and self-negation are formed
- ✓ important to know one's past in order to progress toward a life of oneself
- ✓ seeing others going through their struggles encourages one to walk through my own
- ✓ learn not to be captured by fear and be able to speak up about opinions and feelings
- ✓ take active response in life and no more being frightened off due to low esteem
- ✓ learn not to depend on oneself solely; need to turn also to others and God
- ✓ learn to see life from a different angle through other people's point of view
- ✓ learn to appreciate oneself in the Lord and help others irrespective of limitation
- ✓ provides a platform for me to be able to draw closer to myself and God
- ✓ be opened to people and see from God's eyes rather than stubbornness in my own world
- ✓ commit to doing things right away rather than previously having low motivation
- ✓ need to have perspective about what life need to progress to and what I need to do
- ✓ help me to look at life from multiple angles
- ✓ learn about myself and God more to locate where life should be placed
- ✓ take life seriously and share learnings with other second-generation youth
- ✓ Be more ready to speak out one's identity as a Christian
- ✓ doing background work is a call to be a faithful helper and servant leadership

APPENDIX P

MASK DRAWING OF 2016

		
Inside Out	Change & Evolve	Explore
Keep Your Heart Clean Be Authentic To The Lord Trust in Him	Overcome Shadow & Surpass Loneliness The True Perseverance	Solitude Allows A Time Of Meditation And Reflection
		
Freedom	Undercover	Speechless
The Little One Desire To Be Freed	The Color Under The Veil	Unspeakable Impressions Inside
		
Exit	Moment of Maturity	Live Authentically
Inside A Labyrinth Follow You Closely, I Will	I Find My Way	Breakthrough The Frames Outflow The Colors of Life

		
Bewilder	A Third Person Me	Still Struggling
Lost in Astray Through God Finds A Way	Life Is Like A Set Of Scattered Dots	Even In Christ Temptation Still Come Astray Sometimes
		
Prodigal Return	Lost And Found	Together With You
Previously As a Slacker It Stings Now Love God And My Neighbor	Up And Down In Life Reflect Upon Life Colors Always Along	Though The Road Is Long Even In Darkness There Is Light
		
Thread Of Mind	Superhero	I Can See Now
Reflect Fragmented Emotions Reintegrate The Thread of Mind	All Along I See Power I Possess Till I Realize All Abilities Are From Him	Finally I Can See Now He Is Leading The Way The Very Work Of God

APPENDIX Q

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF 2017

The descriptions are gathered referring to the qualitative assessment tools set of reflective questions, where the primary sources are from personal journal writings as well as individual interviews. The narrative descriptions of 2017 selected participants are about their experiences with the SLD framework. The descriptions are listed below with codes of characteristics underlined. The narratives have been lightly edited but retain the sense of a personal journal.

Shadow: 35, First-Person Narrative Description

The training programs help me to discover my repeated patterns. I have a fear of facing authority, particularly with those who are significant to me and always feel defeated that I am not able to meet up with their expectations. Most of the time, I will react in tears; and gradually, my self-esteem becomes so low that I start to deny myself.

The training programs help me to review my past. After I graduated from high school, I went overseas to continue my studies and stayed at my uncle's place. There, cousins bullied me, and my aunt misunderstood me. For years I had nowhere to turn to but locked myself up in the room. By the time I was graduated and back in Hong Kong, I continued to feel discarded by friends and colleagues. Loneliness overwhelmed me, I did not know who to turn to, and gradually my personality turned inward. The training programs help me to build up a habit of solitude and reflection; in such a way, I can reflect with myself what is happening, reviewing the influences I may have from my past, and allowing myself to be embraced in the fullness of God's grace.

Crying sometimes helps me to find escape, shelter, and to cool down; nevertheless, it is only a pattern of running away. There was an incident in one of the training programs about climbing the sloop of a dam. Although my pattern of escaping came again, with all the support from the training community, I determined not to run away this time. I stood up for the challenge; there the overcoming experience brought a breakthrough to me. That is the very first time I felt so real that God is my strength, and those who look upon him will not be weary.

Since then, I began to open up myself and go deeper into my soul. I found out I am quite disconnected with my earthly father. I come from a traditional Chinese clan where males always have a dominant status in the family. I am the only child in my family who is a female, and mother is very sentimental in expressing her feelings. Whenever mother or myself expressed depressed emotions and tears in helpless situations, my father will become furiously angry, condemning our unmanliness and putting a stop to such down-drilling expressions. I felt so helpless, as even my feelings are to be rejected and ignored.

The training programs helped me to encounter my source of depression and helplessness; yet at the same time, to discover the embracement I have from God all along, that He is there leading me in going through all these. With my heart settled, suddenly I came to realize there is love from my earthly father too, as he is so eager to direct me not to be trapped by emotions, with a fatherly purpose to make sure I can handle life more assertively and vigorously. It is just that my father has his own life history that needs to be recovered from, resulting with his own pattern of running away from emotions, which resulted from his lack of the appropriate skill to handle

other people's emotions. This new understanding helped me to get out of the swamp and start to look at life from a different angle.

There came a time in the training programs, a night journey where my group needed to cross over a bush in darkness, and such a challenge activity took nearly an hour. Someone invited me to take the lead, and my fear immediately rang the bell from nowhere. After a careful evaluation, I decided to take the second position of leading instead, as the front leading was after all not fit for me. There I took the second position, assisting the leader to relocate where we are, to recall the path taken, to take care of those behind, and to leave a footstep for those behind to take cautious faithfully. And it suddenly became crystal clear that this is exactly the kind of role fits me well. Although I may not be in the leading role, I am still a servant leader, assisting those who are at the right position, providing the necessary supports and contributions to the final goal with which I also resonate. These reflections initiated my search for the vocation that God would have called me unto.

Right after the training programs, there came an incident where my mother accidentally lost all the data on my father's mobile phone. My mother called me in tears with father shouting in the background outrageously. I do not know where the strength comes from, that I calmed my mother, spoke to my father to understand the situation, got home, took the mobile to some professional store, and eventually got it fixed. I discovered I have built up a different skill, not just about self-confident or self-efficacy, but a Christian character of peacemaking, standing in between disputes and confrontations, and even parenting my parent for a better relationship. My shadow in the past has helped me to build up the sensitivity, to provide the appropriate empathy

at the right moment, to recognize what focus to take in such a way to allow a step of progress at a time and a role that I can play to facilitate overall benefit for the whole.

I have now a new role in my family, a new role in the youth ministry department, and a new role in relating to others, as well as relating to my boyfriend. These are not what I would expect when I first registered the YLT project, and the transformation that came is not just any systematic Bible studies will do.

Wound: 53, First-Person Narrative Description

I am a pastor's kid. I have been attending the church which my father is pastoring ever since I was born. Since then, people's eyes are on me, day in and day out, and I have to learn to behave appropriately within the church environment. I was diagnosed with a learning disability when I was very young, and I realize that I need to spend extra time to keep up with my learning. Since then, I am familiar with the words played on me by my colleagues, about my outlook, my behavior, my thinking pattern, etc.

It may require extra time for me to make things right, but I am a responsible person. Though I may not be a decisive person, as my mind does not function fast, and hardly grasp the overall picture of what, in fact, is going on, I am very willing to play a role to make things well. I am a sensitive person; on the bright side, I agree with others' feelings and empathize with their struggles; yet on the other hand, I always feel insecure and doubt whether people will take me seriously. Thereupon, I always try to assume roles or responsibilities in such a way, to find myself valuable.

One of the training programs helps me to review my trails of growth in my family, and I begin to realize, I have a lot of inner tensions and unsettled emotions toward my

father. I recall all the incidents that he has picked on me about my behaviors, style of daily living, and how I should think and behave as a Christian. On another side, I also recall all the complaints he has had with the church and the colleagues he is working with, which make me wonder how come a pastor is like that. With all these mumblings in mind, upon a time of worship at one of the training sessions, there occurred to me a flash of thought from the Spirit, that I was admiring my father as a pastor so much that I have projected a lot of perfection on him. To some extent, I was also disappointed with my ideal image of personhood, that not even myself can meet up to that call. Such an understanding helps me to adjust my thoughts and expectations; and in turn, bring forward changes in my attitude in interacting and relating to my father.

During a prayer session in one of the training programs, my mentor prayed for me, and he prayed in words which are entirely expressing what I was feeling in my heart and what I have been experiencing in life. I felt so touched and so understood, not only that someone knows me, but also God knows every detail in my life. Many memories flashed back, but this time with a strong feeling of the love and grace of God in and through all these years in my life. That is precisely the turning point that I start to lay aside my griefs, the innermost feelings that I am a nobody, and become more relaxed with whom I am, realizing no more all those unnecessary efforts to prove my worthiness. I learn to be authentic about myself, instead of being a pastor's son, or in the image of some icon that I am fond of.

The training programs help me to understand myself, awareness of the reasons behind, rebuild my self-image, and re-experience the wonderfulness of interaction in the small group as of the training community; in such a way, I can rebuild my confidence

with people and feel secure to interact with them authentically. I come to accept myself as who I am, such that I can live out the person that God has created me and called me to be.

Grace: 21, First-Person Narrative Description

After graduation, I have been wondering what kind of career will fit me well. I never knew a job mattered so much to me, as it reveals a lot of lost and found anxiety in my life. During the training programs, I have heard a lot about exploring calling in the Lord. It creates a longing in me, but also distress, and wondering whether I will be able to get hold of my vocation. It is until one of the training sessions revisiting our life focuses, helping me to reflect whether I have put Christ in the center of my life, where I was enlightened, realizing vocation is not solely about pursuing something satisfying or purposeful, it is about whom I am and am becoming. Perhaps, what I truly worry and feel frightened of is not career itself, or whether a particular career is worth a commitment; instead, it is all about what is life, and how will I define myself by living out my life. I discover if I let not God become the central drive in things that I do, irrespective how spiritual and beautiful I could put words and meaning to justify the weight of my life goal, it is only a superficial futile attempt, and the fear of loss will always be there.

Since childhood, I have developed ways of survival, and many pairs of spectacles I use as focuses to look at the world. Since the training programs, it seems as if these spectacles have become unfocused, and new pairs are required. Try to imagine oneself as the blind whom Jesus opened his eyes to see. While long in darkness, the eyes will

not be able to adjust the light so quickly. Things will still be a blur when the eyes are first opened. It will take a while before things can be cleared off, and the pathway in front will be focused. This metaphor describes the kind of status I am at right now. I am too accustomed to rush thing through, just like during one of the training sessions when we hiked; I have not spent times to locate myself; instead, I follow instinct and continue brutally along the way. Just wondering, how long will it still be required before my vision can be cleared.

And I wonder, when vision begins to come back, the first thing to catch sight will be those that have long been around, and one will be surprised to find out, there is no differentiation of you or me, everything is just merely one in a whole. Just like the time during the outdoor overnight camp in one of the training programs, the day when I transplant a small potted plant back to nature, I realize it is in the first place a part of God's creation. Irrespective of the outlook of the potted plant, there is no differentiation of high or low, honorable or dishonorable within nature. I am from a grassroots family and living in a comparatively poor district, although I have healthy esteem with myself, sometimes I am uneasy in being labeled as a weak low class. Nevertheless, the experiences and reflections of this training session allow me to look at things with a different perspective, no more from a social or political spectacle, but from a spectacle of the unconditional gracious providence we can have in God.

Moreover, at that very moment when I still have the potted plant in hand, looking at the botanic garden around me, I suddenly come into conscious that God creates this world not for the sake of survival of the fittest, as the world is created so wonderfully with a fabulous design. Rather, it is humans who consciously or sometimes

unconsciously put ourselves at the center, and use our competitive nature to interpret it, and follow our own heart to create a world that contributes to personal benefit. Perhaps it is because humans are so fond of creating, not knowing that we are only participating in what has already been created.

I now felt connected to this world; but how about people. One day during personal time with the mentor from the YLT project, we touched on the topic about intimacy, about the unintended boundary I have set when relating to others. I do recognize my handicap in this area, but not expecting people can see it though. Initially, I thought it is all about time constraints, yet when I think deeper, there are not any excuses for not even a quick Whatsapp or phone call. Connection with people is not that far away. Deep beneath at the bottom of my hesitation is all about my relationship with my mother.

When I was young, I was very attached to my mother. Until form one, my mother was displaying symptoms of illness, and two years after, she was diagnosed with mental illness. The whole personality of my mother changed, and she has become a total stranger to me. The intimate relationship gradually subsided, and it is all of a sudden. Even until today, I come very close in forgetting all those years of snuggling with my mother, and all those beautiful feelings of connectedness. Now, when I try to associate the word intimacy, all I can recall is fear. A great part of it is due to the grief of such a sudden loss of closeness, and such mourning has never been probably expressed. Another mentor explains to me, emotions have a memory too, and it is very real as I can sense my clouded emotions contribute a much stronger drive in my life than my conscious reasonings. If these unsettled memories continue to be around,

reconnection with my mother will be difficult. It is a complicated feeling; on the one hand, I wish to be encouraging and protective to my mother; on the other hand, I am still angry with her.

It is so amazing the ways the training programs are arranged. During a meditative program in peeling off the onion skins layer by layer, words, and feelings which have long been forgotten suddenly come back to my line of thoughts; merciful, gracious, loving-kindness, compassion, forgiving, embracing, etc. It is just like the gifts of God redelivered again. I used to draw sketches for my mother, to express my sincere emotional thoughts to her. I do not recall when I stopped doing so; yet, as and when this habit subsided, words of kindness and love language also faded away. Now that I have reflected all these, doorways are reopened, and there is a new hope that I can rekindle. Where should I start to work out these blockages in my life? I do not know, but I believe God has led me through so far, and He will continue doing so. (A postscript: 21 has arranged their very first family trip this autumn to Beijing, as the first attempt of reconnection.)

YLT is coming to an end, and when I recall the past ten months, all the thoughts and changes in my life, it is not easy to give a summary that can explain thoroughly. Suddenly, it comes to my senses that what I have been writing and reflecting have not yet concluded; it is only a beginning. I ended up writing a letter to myself to conclude all my reflections. A life to continue and a story to develop, and this time provided me an opportunity to use a different perspective to narrate the story and co-develop the details with the Master of all. Not a perfect tense about the past, but

a present continuous tense of newness, leading onto the pathway of calling where I will find Him leading me through.

Vocation (Purposeful): 15, First-Person Narrative Description

I come from a good family, a pastor father, a teacher mother, and a supportive brother. They are very embracing and supportive throughout my years as a teenager. Under such a pleasant environment, I have become quite self-focused and individual. And although my character is helpful and gentle, having such a long while in such a supportive environment, I become too attached to such a safety net and comfort zone. As a result, I have acquired a character of laziness, and lack the courage to meet up with the challenges in life. These are the reasons why I laid down the objective of joining the training programs, with an aim to review my life in such a way to look for changes and transformation.

I know my challenge remains as being too attached to the current state of life; however, without an apparent reason why I have to take on the pace, I would choose not to. During the training programs when I reviewed a few repeated patterns in my life, I came to be aware it is not really about staying in or moving out, it is the passivity I have unconsciously acquired that matters. I used to be very proactive at the high school, involved in all sort of club activities, leading and promoting. I enjoyed the community very much with peers, spending time together and accomplishing all sort of purposes wholeheartedly. However, when my peers moved on with their life to continue their studies at various colleges, while I only settled with an associate degree, a complementary way of continuing studies in Hong Kong, these enjoyable gatherings

and connections gradually vanished. I have lost interest or momentum to make new friends or create new purposes. Since then, I have become laid back in everything I do. Things get worse when I claim myself as optimistic, not knowing that it is a just a way to give self-convincing excuses that things will be better sooner or later, and God will work a way out for me.

The issue I am facing became more evident when we had the overnight camp during one of the training sessions. It was the time we have to meet some challenges; hiking a long way, crossing bushes in darkness, etc. Not knowing that my mentor has arranged the level of tailor-made difficulties specifically for me to go through. Each challenge I doubt my capability and give excuses trying to get away from it; yet, each I accomplished exceedingly. My mentor was making use of these hands-on experiences; he confronted me that it has nothing to do with my ability, and why I would talk myself out. I come to realize it is a pattern of self-persuasion, only to give reasons to remain in the comfort zone. Worst of all, I cheated even myself, allowing the passivity to be rooted and continuing to bury myself beneath the soil. The experiences during the outdoor challenges made me realize that I could do it, and well in all aspects. It helps to affirm my sense of existence, not only that I am never a faceless person, but precisely there is a place for me to play.

To get out of the comfort zone is one thing; where to go is another. Where then is my intended direction for life? I appreciate my father very much, capable, determined, and responsible; he is just a hero to me. I told myself, the reason I like my father simply because I wish to follow God just as my father does, and only if I can confirm a goal that God is leading me, I can commit my footstep wholeheartedly. Right after this

statement, I realize there is another problem behind, that I need to see a clear and straight path before I can claim the faith forward. The most memorable teaching during the training programs is about finding the path of life. The teaching reminds me that the journey of life is never a straight line; instead, it is like a spiral, circulating around a particular theme or themes long enough, such that life suddenly discovers its story to narrate. I am very fond of drama; that is my primary focus when I am in secondary school. It interests me because of the fun, the creativeness, the openness for people to interpret, the power of enlightenment, and most important of all, I find a part in it. However, my involvement dropped out because the phase with school finished, no more clubs, and no more peers. I asked myself during the training programs, if engaging in a drama is so exciting and meaningful to me, why I let it spiral off. In the end, I will have to be responsible for my own life, take it or leave it, I will have to make the call and face the consequence. Perhaps it is the first time I felt so motivated and affirmative with something ahead to pursue.

I have a prayer to my heavenly Father: thank you so much with all the things in my life, though I may not be worthy for what I deserve, particularly when I look back at my wishy-washy attitude. I now make a vow to you, you will be the focus of my life, and no more I will stay in my comfort zone; instead, I will walk my path of life, spiral my journey to discover the central theme. No more wait and see, but look out and search your will, and be more proactive in following you. (A postscript: July 2017, two months after this prayer, 15 invited us to a drama in which he was playing as one of the leading actors.)

Vocation (Missional): 14, First-Person Narrative Description

I started the training without a clear purpose, as I used to be a contributor to ministries where I have roles and responsibilities to anchor, but this training came without a role to play. During the training when I was asked to listen and reflect, I became distracted and felt out of place. Attentiveness has always been my difficulties, solitude with oneself is seldom, where I will usually fill up with other things. It is during the second training while we are outdoor stream trekking, I come to realize I need to spend the time to reflect upon my faith, or else it will be like walking the journey with the backpack on, knowing not what kind of load I am carrying. Such reflection became my goal for the rest of the training, to review my actions and deeds if they correspond to the talk of my faith.

I am a rational person and problem-solving oriented; emotions usually distract the correct decisions and are to be put aside. I am quite independent, handling my living and making my decisions long since senior high. My task-orientated characteristics not only provide me with the dynamic in handling things but also drives people along the way.

During the training programs, I come to discover more about myself. I find out that I am a very nervous person when it comes to displaying my personality in public, afraid that certain flaws will be caught by others. On the one hand, it is because of the shameful experience when I was caught cheating at school; on the other hand, I hope for a perfect image in the eyes of others. Another discovery is the relationship with my mother. I communicate poorly with my mother and often end up quarreling. My father passed away when I was very young; to make the end meet, mother, brother, and I work on all sorts of efforts to make the family whole, but not soulfully. It is through

learning to listen to others as well as oneself during the training programs that I come to realize my connections with myself and family members are relatively remote.

When I go deep into my soul, I found out it is not the fear of shame that set the boundary between me and others; instead, it is the fear of confrontation, fear to be hurt emotionally, and fear of separation. As my father has passed away, mother and brother are the most dependable persons I ever have, and I am afraid to lose hold of any one of them. And when I look deep into my concern on public presentation, I discover it is also about the fear of failure, afraid of rejection and termination. My pattern of running away is very obvious, disappearing for a few days, and back as if nothing has happened. I need to prove my worthiness and became very conscious when challenges come as if it is testing my ability. It affects my studies, my work, my relationship with family members, and my intention of close friendship with the opposite sex.

Things get worse when these inner emotions turn outward, trying to get rid of anything that poses a threat to me. Temper at work, overeat when trying to relax, envy others' ability, compare and compete with others, overwhelming pride and proudness. I begin to look down at others in the name of good stewardship, but it is just another opportunity to compare and make myself feel better. It is the time when the training programs began the topic on vocation, then I started to have a glimpse on what the focus of life could be, and to my surprise, all these unnecessary conflicts inside me begin to subside.

I start to dream dreams and think about what I can do and go further in life, in terms of serving others and God. I am at a crossroads previously, whether to spend more time at church or work, whether certain involvement is time justified and soulfully

satisfied. Now that the Spirit reminds me and calls me to turn from a freelance volunteer attitude to a full-time worker commitment. Not that I am ready to go full-time serving, but a call for a wholeheartedness in committing my life to God. Like map setting during one of the training programs outdoors, such a focused intention set my path onward, helped me to focus on the right things and clear off unnecessary distraction where there used to be a lot. It is not about finding the right path, but the right destination, such that periodically the right checkpoint will appear to provide the marker. My interim goal and commitment are to take care of the next generation at church, as a bridge to guide them toward the faith, just the way I was being guided and taken care of.

Throughout the training, the fellowship within the training community is an entirely different world of matters. People are allowed to take their own pace, each is given time to be listened to, and responded with deep thoughts. I enjoy the sharing throughout the programs very much; authentic, reflective, and enlightening. I start to do so with the brotherhood I have in my fellowship, particularly with those who are close to me. I enjoy the embracing brotherhood more than the competitive championship. Walking together, sharing genuine issues, encouraging each other, sharing loads, praying together, seeing and reminding the love and grace of God that has always been around us; though we may have different gifts, goals, and paths of life, we feel we are together in the Lord. I begin to see my recovery in connection with self, with others, and with God. I start to communicate better with my mother, sharing more in-depth with my brother, and involve patiently at ministries. Life is all different now.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Anderson, Bernhard W. *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000.
- Arnett, Jefferey Jensen. *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Arzxola, Fernando, Brian Cosby, Ron Hunter, Greg Stier, and Chap Clark. *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century: Five Views*. Edited by Chap Clark. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015.
- Beasley-Topliffe, Keith. *The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2017.
- Berk, Laura E. *Exploring Lifespan Development*. New York, NY: Allyn and Bacon, 2007.
- Berry, Wendell. *Sex, Economy, Freedom, and Community: Eight Essays*. New York, NY: Pantheon, 1993.
- Black, Wesley, Chap Clark, Malan Nel, and Mark H. Senter. *Four Views of Youth Ministry and the Church: Inclusive Congregational, Preparatory, Missional, Strategic*. Edited by Mark H. Senter. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- Boa, Kenneth. *Conformed to His Image: Biblical and Practical Approaches to Spiritual Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- Boda, Mark J. "Old Testament Foundations of Christian Spirituality." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 40-45.
- Brown, Jeanine K. "New Testament Foundations of Christian Spirituality." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 46-51.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *The Message of the Psalms*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1984.
- Buechner, Frederick. *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 1994.
- Capps, Donald. *The Decades of Life: A Guide to Human Development*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008.

- Chan, Simon. "Spiritual Theology." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 52-57.
- Choi, Philemon Yuen-wan. "Topical Studies: Church Renewal and Revolution." In *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*. Edited by David C. W. Wu and Eric T. H. Lau. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited, 2016. 174-181.
- . *Not One Less: Rethinking the Youth and the Ministry*. Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2005.
- . *Using Life to Influence Another Life*. Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2001.
- Chow, Suk-ping. *Our Responsibilities*. Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2015.
- Coe, John H. "Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 34-39.
- Crosby, Michael H. *Spirituality of the Beatitudes: Matthew's Vision for the Church in an Unjust World*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005.
- Dawn, Marva J. *Unfettered Hope: A Call to Faithful Living in an Affluent Society*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010.
- Dean, Kenda Creasy. *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Deaton, Angus. *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origin of Inequality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Demarest, Bruce. *Satisfy Your Soul*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1999.
- Downey, Michael. *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1993.
- Erikson, Erik H. *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. New York, NY: Norton, 1995.
- . *Childhood and Society*. New York, NY: Norton, 1994.
- Garber, Steven. *The Fabric of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief and Behavior*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007.
- Gardner, Howard E. *Truth, Beauty, and Goodness Reframed: Educating for the Virtues in the Age of Truthiness and Twitter*. New York, NY: Basic Book, 2011.

- Gardner, Howard E., Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and William Damon. *Good Work: When Excellence and Ethics Meet*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2001.
- Goldenberg, Herbert, and Irene Goldenberg. *Family Therapy: An Overview*. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning, 2012.
- Hays, Richard B. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1996.
- Hiebert, Paul G. *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Hollinger, Dennis P. "Mission and Ministry." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 228-233.
- Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Research Team. *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years: Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*. Edited by David C. W. Wu and Eric T. H. Lau. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited, 2016.
- Howard, Evan B. *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality*. Gloucester, UK: Brazos Press, 2008.
- Jensen, Paul L. *Subversive Spirituality: Transforming Mission through the Collapse of Space and Time*. Portland, ME: Pickwick, 2009.
- Jones, Stanton L., and Richard E. Butman. *A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal: Modern Psycho-Therapies*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008.
- Keck, Leander E. *The Church Confident: Christianity Can Repent but It Must Not Whimper*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *The Works of Love*. Translated by David F. Swenson. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1946.
- Kohlberg, Lawrence. *Psychology of Moral Development*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1984.
- Kwong, Wing-yuen. *Standing on the side of the egg: Hong Kong Post 80s 'Zhan zai dan de yibian: Xianggang bashibou'*. Hong Kong: UP Publications Limited, 2010.
- Lee, Stephen. "Challenges in Pastoring College Student and Young Working Adult." In *Pastoral Ministry in Turbulent Years - Studies on Hong Kong Church 2014*. Edited by David C. W. Wu and Eric T. H. Lau. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement Limited, 2016. 139-146.
- Lewis, Harry R. *Excellence without a Soul*. New York, NY: Ingram, 2007.

- Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*. Eastford, CT: Martino Publishing, 2011.
- Loder, James E. *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998.
- . *The Transforming Moment*. 2nd ed. Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers & Howard, 1989.
- Lovelace, Richard F. *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979.
- Luft J., and Ingham H. “The Johari window, a graphic model of interpersonal awareness” in *Proceedings of the western training laboratory in group development*. Los Angeles: UCLA, 1955.
- Mathews, Joe. “The Power of Potential.” In *The Meaning of Life Project: Designing a Life Worth Living*. Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2004.
- Maxwell, Joseph A. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996.
- Meyer, Keith. *Whole Life Transformation: Becoming the Change Your Church Needs*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010.
- . “Whole-Life Transformation.” In *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation*. Edited by Alan Andrews. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010. 139-164.
- Miller, Sherod, Elam W. Nunally, and Daniel B. Wackman. *Alive and Aware: Improving Communications in Relationships*. Minneapolis, MN: Interpersonal Communication Programs, 1975.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2001.
- Moreland, J. P. *Love Your God with All Your mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1997.
- Mulholland, Robert M., Jr. *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
- . “Spirituality and Transformation.” In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 216-221.
- Murray, Charles. *Coming Apart: The States of White America, 1960-2010*. Danvers, MA: Crown Forum, 2012.

- Niebuhr, H. Richard. *The Meaning of Revelation*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006.
- Nouwen, Henri J. M. *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1979.
- . *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*. New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1975.
- Oden, Thomas C. *Game-Free: The Meaning of Intimacy*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1974.
- Palmer, Parker J. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- . *The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999.
- . *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2007.
- Papalia, Diane E., Sally Wendkos Olds, and Ruth Duskin Feldman. *Human Development*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2004.
- Peterson, Eugene H. *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005.
- Scorgie, Glen G. *A Little Guide to Christian Spirituality*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007.
- . "Overview of Christian Spirituality." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 27-33.
- Scorgie, Glen G., and Kevin S. Reimer. "Spirituality in Community." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 77-83.
- Sheldrake, Philip. *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003.
- Smith, Christian, Kari Christoffersen, Hilary Davidson, and Patricia Snell Herzog. *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Smith, Gordon T. *Transforming Conversion: Rethinking the Language and Contours of Christian Initiation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.

- Soderquist, Strolls, Anna. "Receptivity," in *Kierkegaard on Dialogical Education: Vulnerable Freedom*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016.
- Solomon, Robert M. "Contextual Spirituality." In *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Edited by Glen G. Scorgie. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 205-210.
- Stott, John R. W. "The Message of the Sermon on the Mount: Christian Counter-Culture." In *The Bible Speaks Today*. Edited by John Stott. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008.
- . *The Radical Disciple: Some Neglected Aspects of Our Calling*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010.
- Tasker, R. V. G. "The Gospel According to St. Matthew." In *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980.
- Thrall, Bill, and Bruce McNicol. "Communities of Grace." In *The Kingdom Life: A Practical Theology of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation*. Edited by Alan Andrews. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010. 61-84.
- Tournay, Jacques. *Seeing and Hearing God with the Psalms: The Prophetic Liturgy of the Second Temple in Jerusalem*. Translated by J. Edward Crowley. Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1991.
- Vanie, Jean. *Community and Growth*. New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1989.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996.
- Wakefield, Gordon, *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1983.
- Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013.
- Willard, Dallas. *Renovation of the Heart*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2002.
- Wilson, Sandra. *Counseling Adult Children of Alcoholics*. Dallas, TX: Word, 1989.
- Wright, N. T. *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2010.
- Yancey, Philip. *What's So Amazing About Grace?* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998.
- Yust, Karen Marie, and E. Byron Anderson. *Taught by God: Teaching and Spiritual Formation*. Atlanta, GA: Chalice Press, 2006.

Articles and Journals

- Centre for Child and Family Science, Education University of Hong Kong. "The Myth of Champion Begins at the Starting Line." *Metro Daily Hong Kong*. Accessed August 6, 2016. <http://www.metrohk.com.hk/index.php?cmd=detail&id=182076>.
- Chan-So, Peggy C. Y. "Validation of the Chinese Version of Differentiation of Self Inventory (C-DSI)." *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 41, no. 1 (January 2015): 86-101.
- Cheung, Elizabeth. "Depression Hits Half of Secondary Pupils and a Quarter Has Considered Suicide." *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong edition, August 31, 2015. Accessed February 22, 2017. <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/1853967/depression-hits-just-over-half-hong-kong-secondary>.
- Choi, Philemon Yuen-wan. "Mentoring and Youth Development." *Youth Global Network Youth Ministry Training* (Autumn 2016).
- Davids, Jim. "Research on Spiritual Development." Regent University Academics Affairs. Accessed August 14, 2016. https://www.regent.edu/academics/academic_affairs/faculty_essentials/welcome/resources/Research_On_Spiritual_Development.pdf.
- EFCC Yan Fook Church. "Yan Fook Church's History." Accessed August 4, 2016. <http://www.yanfook.org.hk/history.php>.
- Fong, David. "Life Transformation, Live Out a Missional Life." *SFIC Stand Firm in Christ*. Hong Kong: Yan Fook Church Youth Ministry, 2015.
- Fong, Ken. "Exceedingly Fond: The Asian American Initiative at Fuller Theological Seminary." Accessed August 6, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMkJEPiEtUU>.
- Fowler, James W. "Perspectives on Adolescents, Personhood, and Faith." *Family Ministry* 13 (September 1999): 22-32.
- Gaultier, Bill. "Life in Christ: Questions on Developmental Stages." *Soul Shepherding*. Accessed August 13, 2016. <http://www.soulshepherding.org/2015/04/life-in-christ-questions-on-developmental-stages/>.
- Gushiken, Kevin M. "Nurturing Spiritual Identity Formation in Youth Curriculum from the Theological-Psychological Approach of James Loder." *Christian Education Journal* series 3, 7, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 319-33.

- Harrell, Stevan. "Patriliny, Patriarchy, Patrimony: Surface Features and Deep Structures in the Chinese Family System." Accessed February 4, 2017. <http://faculty.washington.edu/stevehar/PPP.html>.
- Hill, Peter C., and Kenneth I. Pargament. "Advances in the Conceptualization and Measurement of Religion and Spirituality." *American Psychologist* 58, no. 1 (2003): 64-74.
- Hollinger, Dennis P. Excerpt from "Head, Heart and Hands." Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Accessed August 1, 2016. <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/insidescoop/Hollinger-Head-Heart-Hands.cfm>.
- Houtson, James. "Principles of Spiritual Direction." Lecture, Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church, Singapore, 1992.
- Howe, Neil, and William Strauss. "Characteristics of the Millennial Generation." *Millennials Go to College* (2003). Accessed July 28, 2016. <https://students.rice.edu/images/students/AADV/OWeek2008AADVResources/Characteristics%20of%20the%20Millennial%20Generation.pdf>.
- Johnstone, Anna. "GEN WHEN? Who are Millennials, Baby Boomers and Generation Z? Generation groups explained." *The Sun*, UK edition, March 25, 2018. Accessed June 22, 2018. <https://www.thesun.co.uk/fabulous/5505402/millennials-baby-boomers-generation-groups-z-y-x-explained/>.
- Kim, Young Hee. "Relationship Between World View and Religion." Global Christian Centre. Accessed July 29, 2016. <http://globalchristiancenter.com/bible-and-theology/systematic-theology/24569-relationship-between-world-view-and-religion>.
- Larkin, Ernest E. "The Three Spiritual Ways." *The Published Articles of Ernest E. Larkin, O.Carm.* Accessed August 3, 2016. <http://carmelnet.org/larkin/larkin092.pdf>.
- Lee, Coleen. "Post 80s rebels with a cause." *The Standard*, Hong Kong, June 20, 2010. Retrieved June 29, 2011.
- McBride, Dean S., Jr. "The Yoke of the Kingdom; An Exposition of Deuteronomy 6:4-5." *Interpretation* 27, no. 3 (1973): 273-306.
- Myers, Jeremy. "Stop Saying Christians Aren't Perfect." *Redeeming God: Rescuing Scripture, Theology and Church from the Shackles of Religion*. Accessed August 10, 2016. <https://redeeminggod.com/Christians-arent-perfect/>.

- Ng, Chong Hin. "2016 Survey on Global Chinese Churches Mission and Discipleship." Survey presented by Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism, Hong Kong, November 11, 2016.
- Ng, Kang-Chung. "Social Mobility in Hong Kong Getting Harder." *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong edition, March 5, 2013. Accessed July 28, 2016. <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1177243/social-mobility-hong-kong-getting-harder-poll-says>.
- Peers, Allison E. "Dark Night of the Soul by Saint John of the Cross." Christian Classic Ethereal Library. Accessed August 3, 2016. http://www.ccel.org/ccel/john_cross/dark_night.i.html.
- Phillips, Keri. "Tracing the History of Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement." Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Radio National, October 28, 2014. Accessed August 10, 2016. <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/rearvision/tracing-the-history-of-hong-kong's-umbrella-movement/5848312>.
- Shum, Lily. "Breakthrough Interpersonal Ministry 2007 Annual Planning." Ministry notes, annual planning of Breakthrough Limited, Hong Kong, May 2006.
- Sudworth, John. "Hong Kong protesters carry out 'yellow ribbon' march," *BBC News*, Asia edition, November 9, 2014. Accessed June 22, 2018. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-29975423>.
- Vertallier, Bruno R. "Appendix L: Pre and Post Evaluation Questionnaire for the Spiritual Formation Class." In *Graduate Research of D. Min. Andrews University: A Design for Spiritual Formation during the Academic Life of the Adventist Seminary Student at Collonges-Sous-Saleve, France*. Accessed August 14, 2016. <http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dmin>.
- Warren, Rick. "Three Phases of a Paul and Timothy Relationship." February 6, 2014. Pastor.com Community. Accessed December 22, 2016. <http://pastors.com/paul-timothy/#>.
- Wong, Enoch, K. C. "Hemorrhaging Faith: An Exploration of Faith Journey of Canadian Youth." Lecture, Carey Seminary Regen Conference, Vancouver, British Columbia, November 20, 2014.
- . "How Am I Going to Grow Up? An Exploration of Congregational Transition among Second-Generation Chinese Canadian Evangelicals and Servant-Leadership." Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA, 2015.

———. “Second Generation Exodus: The Experience Sharing with Canadian Chinese Church.” Lecture, The Alliance Bible Seminary Center of Canada, Toronto, Ontario, November 23, 2015.

Yeung, C. “Lion rock.” *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong edition, March 3, 2003. Retrieved March 19, 2015.

Zach, Jeremy. “Three Theological Foundations Shaping 21st Century Youth Ministry Strategy.” ChurchLeaders. Accessed November 5, 2016. http://www.churchleaders.com/youth/youth-leaders-blogs/151929-jeremy_zach_3_theological_foundations_shaping_21st_century_youth_ministry_strategy.html.

VITA

Personal Details

Michael, Yue Wang, Leung
Born on August 25, 1964 in Hong Kong, China

Education

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA, January 2019

- Doctor of Ministry, Ministry to Emerging Generations
- Thesis-Project: Spiritual Life Development for Young Christian Leaders in Hong Kong

China Graduate School of Theology, Hong Kong, May 2006

- Master of Divinity

Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada, May 1986

- Applied Science, computing concentration

Work Experience

Youth Global Network, Hong Kong, 2013 - present

- coordinating a seminary master program for trainers in youth ministries
- delivering lectures and facilitating ministry model building

Tung Fook Church, Evangelical Free Church of China, Hong Kong, 2010-2012

- Youth Pastor, concentrated in training and discipling young leaders

Breakthrough Limited, Hong Kong, 2006-2010

- hosted an alternative academic youth program for dropout deprived youth
- developed approach to engage youth in social concerns

Standard Chartered Bank, Hong Kong, 1990-2003

- involved business technology management and strategy planning
- managed software application and project implementation

Publication

Leung, Michael, et al.. *Pathfinder: The Very Beginning*. Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2008.

Leung, Michael, et al.. *Pathfinder: Get, Set, Go*. Hong Kong: Breakthrough Ltd., 2010.